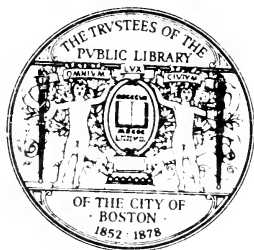


Boston Public Library



Gift of

DEATY ESTATE

L. de Noailles

MEMOIRS

OF

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"Only a learned and a manly soul
I purposed her, that should with even powers
The rock, the spindle, and the shears control
Of destiny, and spin her own free hours."

BEN JONSON.

"Però che ogni diletto nostro è doglia
Sta in sì e nò saper, voler, potere;
Adunque quel sol può, che col dovere
Ne trae la ragion fuor di sua soglia.

Adunque tu' lettor di queste note,
S'a te vuoi esser buono, e agli altri caro,
Vogli sempre poter quel che tu debbi."

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1852.

LONDON :
R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

	PAGE
I. YOUTH.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY	1
PARENTS	4
DEATH IN THE HOUSE	6
OVERWORK	8
THE WORLD OF BOOKS	11
FIRST FRIEND	33
SCHOOL-LIFE	48
SELF-CULTURE	63
 II. CAMBRIDGE. <i>By J. F. Clarke</i>	 71
FRIENDSHIP	88
CONVERSATION.—SOCIAL INTERCOURSE	130
STUDIES	144
CHARACTER.—AIMS AND IDEAS OF LIFE	170

	PAGE
III. GROTON AND PROVIDENCE.—LETTERS & JOURNALS	187
SAD WELCOME HOME	190
OCCUPATIONS	191
MISS MARTINEAU	197
ILLNESS	200
DEATH OF HER FATHER	202
TRIAL	206
BIRTH-DAY	210
DEATH IN LIFE	211
LITERATURE	215
FAREWELL TO GROTON	223
WINTER IN BOSTON	224
PROVIDENCE	232
SCHOOL EXPERIENCES	233
PERSONS	237
ART	246
FANNY KEMBLE	248
MAGNANIMITY	254
SPIRITUAL LIFE	258
FAREWELL TO SUMMER	263
IV. CONCORD. <i>By R. W. Emerson</i>	265
ARCANA	292
DÆMONOLOGY	296
TEMPERAMENT	303

YOUTH.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“ Aus Morgenduft gewebt und Sonnenklarheit
Der Dichtung Schleir aus der Hand her Wahrheit.”

GOETHE.

“ The million stars which tremble
O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.”

TENNYSON.

“ Wie leicht ward er dahin getragen,
Was war dem Glücklichen zu schwer!
Wie tanzte vor des Lebens Wagen
Die luftige Begleitung her !
Die liebe mit dem süßen Lohne,
Das Glück mit seinem gold'nen Kranz,
Der Ruhm mit seiner Sternenkronen,
Die Wahrheit in der Sonne Glanz.”

SCHILLER.

“ What wert thou then ? A child most infantine,
Yet wandering far beyond that innocent age,
In all but its sweet looks and mien divine ;
Even then, methought, with the world’s tyrant rage
A patient warfare thy young heart did wage,
When those soft eyes of scarcely conscious thought
Some tale, or thine own fancies, would engage
To overflow with tears, or converse fraught
With passion o’er their depths its fleeting light had wrought.”

SHELLEY.

“ And I smiled, as one never smiles but once ;
Then first discovering my own aim’s extent,
Which sought to comprehend the works of God,
And God himself, and all God’s intercourse
With the human mind.”

BROWNING.

MEMOIRS

OF

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI.

I.

YOUTH.

“TIECK, who has embodied so many Runic secrets, explained to me what I have often felt toward myself, when he tells of the poor changeling, who, turned from the door of her adopted home, sat down on a stone and so pitied herself that she wept. Yet me also, the wonderful bird, singing in the wild forest, has tempted on, and not in vain.”

Thus wrote Margaret in the noon of life, when looking back through youth to the “dewy dawn of memory.” She was the eldest child of Timothy Fuller and Margaret Crane, and was born in

Cambridge-Port, Massachusetts, on the 23d of May, 1810.

Among her papers fortunately remains this unfinished sketch of youth,* prepared by her own hand, in 1840, as the introductory chapter to an autobiographical romance.

PARENTS.

“ My father was a lawyer and a politician. He was a man largely endowed with that sagacious energy, which the state of New England society, for the last half century, has been so well fitted to develop. His father was a clergyman, settled as pastor in Princeton, Massachusetts, within the bounds of whose parish-farm was Wachuset. His means were small, and the great object of his ambition was to send his sons to college. As a boy, my father was taught to think only of preparing himself for Harvard University, and when there of preparing himself for the profession of law. As a lawyer, again, the ends constantly presented were to work for distinction in the community, and for the means of supporting a family. To be an honoured citizen, and to have a home on earth, were made the great aims of existence. To open the deeper fountains of the

soul, to regard life here as the prophetic entrance to immortality, to develop his spirit to perfection,—motives like these had never been suggested to him, either by fellow-beings or by outward circumstances. The result was a character, in its social aspect, of quite the common sort. A good son and brother, a kind neighbour, an active man of business—in all these outward relations he was but one of a class, which surrounding conditions have made the majority among us. In the more delicate and individual relations, he never approached but two mortals, my mother and myself.

“ His love for my mother was the green spot on which he stood apart from the common-places of a mere bread-winning, bread-bestowing existence. She was one of those fair and flower-like natures, which sometimes spring up even beside the most dusty highways of life—a creature not to be shaped into a merely useful instrument, but bound by one law with the blue sky, the dew, and the frolic birds. Of all persons whom I have known, she had in her most of the angelic,—of that spontaneous love for every living thing, for man, and beast, and tree, which restores the golden age.”

DEATH IN THE HOUSE.

“ My earliest recollection is of a death,—the death of a sister, two years younger than myself. Probably there is a sense of childish endearments, such as belong to this tie, mingled with that of loss, of wonder, and mystery; but these last are prominent in memory. I remember coming home and meeting our nursery-maid, her face streaming with tears. That strange sight of tears made an indelible impression. I realize how little I was of stature, in that I looked up to this weeping face;—and it has often seemed since, that—full-grown for the life of this earth, I have looked up just so, at times of threatening, of doubt, and distress, and that just so has some being of the next higher order of existences looked down, aware of a law unknown to me, and tenderly commiserating the pain I must endure in emerging from my ignorance.

“ She took me by the hand and led me into a still and dark chamber, then drew aside the curtain and showed me my sister. I see yet that beauty of death! The highest achievements of sculpture are only the reminder of its severe

sweetness. Then I remember the house all still and dark,—the people in their black clothes and dreary faces,—the scent of the newly-made coffin,—my being set up in a chair and detained by a gentle hand to hear the clergyman,—the carriages slowly going, the procession slowly doling out their steps to the grave. But I have no remembrance of what I have since been told I did,—insisting, with loud cries, that they should not put the body in the ground. I suppose that my emotion was spent at the time, and so there was nothing to fix that moment in my memory.

“ I did not then, nor do I now, find any beauty in these ceremonies. What had they to do with the sweet playful child? Her life and death were alike beautiful, but all this sad parade was not. Thus my first experience of life was one of death. She who would have been the companion of my life was severed from me, and I was left alone. This has made a vast difference in my lot. Her character, if that fair face promised right, would have been soft, graceful, and lively; it would have tempered mine to a gentler and more gradual course.

OVER-WORK.

“ My father—all whose feelings were now concentrated on me—instructed me himself. The effect of this was so far good that, not passing through the hands of many ignorant and weak persons, as so many do at preparatory schools, I was put at once under discipline of considerable severity, and, at the same time, had a more than ordinarily high standard presented to me. My father was a man of business, even in literature ; he had been a high scholar at college, and was warmly attached to all he had learned there, both from the pleasure he had derived in the exercise of his faculties and the associated memories of success and good repute. He was, beside, well read in French literature, and in English, a Queen Anne’s man. He hoped to make me the heir of all he knew, and of as much more as the income of his profession enabled him to give me means of acquiring. At the very beginning, he made one great mistake, more common, it is to be hoped, in the last generation, than the warnings of physiologists will permit it to be with the ext. He thought to gain time, by bringing

forward the intellect as early as possible. Thus I had tasks given me, as many and various as the hours would allow, and on subjects beyond my age; with the additional disadvantage of reciting to him in the evening, after he returned from his office. As he was subject to many interruptions, I was often kept up till very late; and as he was a severe teacher, both from his habits of mind and his ambition for me, my feelings were kept on the stretch till the recitations were over. Thus frequently, I was sent to bed several hours too late, with nerves unnaturally stimulated. The consequence was a premature development of the brain, that made me a 'youthful prodigy' by day, and by night a victim of spectral illusions, nightmare, and somnambulism, which at the time prevented the harmonious development of my bodily powers and checked my growth, while, later, they induced continual headache, weakness, and nervous affections of all kinds. As these again re-acted on the brain, giving undue force to every thought and every feeling, there was finally produced a state of being both too active and too intense, which wasted my constitution, and will bring me, —even although I have learned to understand and

regulate my now morbid temperament,—to a premature grave.

“ No one understood this subject of health then. No one knew why this child, already kept up so late, was still unwilling to retire. My aunts cried out upon the ‘spoiled child, the most unreasonable child that ever was,—if brother could but open his eyes to see it,—who was never willing to go to bed.’ They did not know that, so soon as the light was taken away, she seemed to see colossal faces advancing slowly towards her, the eyes dilating, and each feature swelling loathsomely as they came, till at last, when they were about to close upon her, she started up with a shriek which drove them away, but only to return when she lay down again. They did not know that, when at last she went to sleep, it was to dream of horses trampling over her, and to awake once more in fright; or, as she had just read in her Virgil, of being among trees that dripped with blood, where she walked and walked and could not get out, while the blood became a pool and plashed over her feet, and rose higher and higher, till soon she dreamed it would reach her lips. No wonder the child arose and walked in her sleep, moaning all

over the house, till once, when they heard her, and came and waked her, and she told what she had dreamed, her father sharply bid her ‘leave off thinking of such nonsense, or she would be crazy,’—never knowing that he was himself the cause of all these horrors of the night. Often she dreamed of following to the grave the body of her mother, as she had done that of her sister, and woke to find the pillow drenched in tears. These dreams softened her heart too much, and cast a deep shadow over her young days; for then, and later, the life of dreams,—probably because there was in it less to distract the mind from its own earnestness,—has often seemed to her more real, and been remembered with more interest, than that of waking hours.

“Poor child! Far remote in time, in thought, from that period, I look back on these glooms and terrors, wherein I was enveloped, and perceive that I had no natural childhood.”

BOOKS.

“Thus passed my first years. My mother was in delicate health, and much absorbed in the care of her younger children. In the house was

neither dog nor bird, nor any graceful animated form of existence. I saw no persons who took my fancy, and real life offered no attraction. Thus my already over-excited mind found no relief from without, and was driven for refuge from itself to the world of books. I was taught Latin and English grammar at the same time, and began to read Latin at six years old, after which, for some years, I read it daily. In this branch of study, first by my father, and afterwards by a tutor, I was trained to quite a high degree of precision. I was expected to understand the mechanism of the language thoroughly, and in translating to give the thoughts in as few well-arranged words as possible, and without breaks or hesitation,—for with these my father had absolutely no patience.

“Indeed, he demanded accuracy and clearness in everything: you must not speak, unless you can make your meaning perfectly intelligible to the person addressed; must not express a thought, unless you can give a reason for it, if required; must not make a statement, unless sure of all particulars—such were his rules. ‘But,’ ‘if,’ ‘unless,’ ‘I am mistaken,’ and ‘it may be so,’

were words and phrases excluded from the province where he held sway. Trained to great dexterity in artificial methods, accurate, ready, with entire command of his resources, he had no belief in minds that listen, wait, and receive. He had no conception of the subtle and indirect motions of imagination and feeling. His influence on me was great, and opposed to the natural unfolding of my character, which was fervent, of strong grasp, and disposed to infatuation and self-forgetfulness. He made the common prose world so present to me, that my natural bias was controlled. I did not go mad, as many would do, at being continually roused from my dreams. I had too much strength to be crushed,—and since I must put on the fetters, could not submit to let them impede my motions. My own world sank deep within, away from the surface of my life; in what I did and said I learned to have reference to other minds. But my true life was only the dearer that it was secluded and veiled over by a thick curtain of available intellect, and that coarse, but wearable stuff woven by the ages,—Common Sense.

“In accordance with this discipline in heroic

common sense, was the influence of those great Romans, whose thoughts and lives were my daily food during those plastic years. The genius of Rome displayed itself in character, and scarcely needed an occasional wave of the torch of thought to show its lineaments, so marble strong they gleamed in every light. Who, that has lived with those men, but admires the plain force of fact, of thought passed into action? They take up things with their naked hands. There is just the man, and the block he casts before you,—no divinity, no demon, no unfulfilled aim, but just the man and Rome, and what he did for Rome. Everything turns your attention to what a man can become, not by yielding himself freely to impressions, not by letting nature play freely through him, but by a single thought, an earnest purpose, an indomitable will, by hardihood, self-command, and force of expression. Architecture was the art in which Rome excelled, and this corresponds with the feeling these men of Rome excite. They did not grow,—they built themselves up, or were built up by the fate of Rome, as a temple for Jupiter Stator. The ruined Roman sits among the ruins; he flies to no green garden;

he does not look to heaven; if his intent is defeated, if he is less than he meant to be, he lives no more. The names which end in "*us*," seem to speak with lyric cadence. That measured cadence,—that tramp and march,—which are not stilted, because they indicate real force, yet which seem so when compared with any other language,—make Latin a study in itself of mighty influence. The language alone, without the literature, would give one the *thought* of Rome. Man present in nature, commanding nature too sternly to be inspired by it, standing like the rock amid the sea, or moving like the fire over the land, either impassive, or irresistible: knowing not the soft mediums or fine flights of life, but by the force which he expresses, piercing to the centre.

"We are never better understood than when we speak of a 'Roman virtue,' a 'Roman outline.' There is somewhat indefinite, somewhat yet unfulfilled in the thought of Greece, of Spain, of modern Italy; but ROME! it stands by itself, a clear word. The power of will, the dignity of a fixed purpose is what it utters. Every Roman was an emperor. It is well that the infallible

Church should have been founded on this rock, that the presumptuous Peter should hold the keys, as the conquering Jove did before his thunderbolts, to be seen of all the world. The Apollo tends flocks with Admetus; Christ teaches by the lonely lake, or plucks wheat as he wanders through the fields some Sabbath morning. They never come to this stronghold; they could not have breathed freely where all became stone as soon as spoken, where divine youth found no horizon for its all-promising glance, but every thought put on, before it dared issue to the day in action, its *toga virilis*.

“Suckled by this wolf, man gains a different complexion from that which is fed by the Greek honey. He takes a noble bronze in camps and battle-fields; the wrinkles of council well besem his brow, and the eye cuts its way like the sword. The Eagle should never have been used as a symbol by any other nation: it belonged to Rome.

“The history of Rome abides in mind, of course, more than the literature. It was degeneracy for a Roman to use the pen; his life was in the day. The ‘vaunting’ of Rome, like that of the North American Indians, is her proper litera-

ture. A man rises; he tells who he is, and what he has done; he speaks of his country and her brave men; he knows that a conquering god is there, whose agent is his own right hand: and he should end like the Indian, 'I have no more to say.'

"It never shocks us that the Roman is self-conscious. One wants no universal truths from him, no philosophy, no creation, but only his life, his Roman life felt in every pulse, realized in every gesture. The universal heaven takes in the Roman only to make us feel his individuality the more. The Will, the Resolve of Man!—it has been expressed,—fully expressed!

"I steadily loved this ideal in my childhood, and this is the cause, probably, why I have always felt that man must know how to stand firm on the ground, before he can fly. In vain for me are men more, if they are less, than Romans. Dante was far greater than any Roman, yet I feel he was right to take the Mantuan as his guide through hell, and to heaven.

"Horace was a great deal to me then, and is so still. Though his words do not abide in memory, his presence does: serene, courtly, of darting hazel eye, a self-sufficient grace, and an appre-

ciation of the world of stern realities, sometimes pathetic, never tragic. He is the natural man of the world; he is what he ought to be, and his darts never fail of their aim. There is a perfume and raciness, too, which makes life a banquet, where the wit sparkles no less than the viands were bought with blood.

“Ovid gave me not Rome, nor himself, but a view into the enchanted gardens of the Greek mythology. This path I followed, have been following ever since; and now, life half over, it seems to me, as in my childhood, that every thought of which man is susceptible, is intimated there. In those young years, indeed, I did not see what I now see, but loved to creep from amid the Roman pikes to lie beneath this great vine, and see the smiling and serene shapes go by, woven from the finest fibres of all the elements. I knew not why, at that time,—but I loved to get away from the hum of the forum, and the mailed clang of Roman speech, to these shifting shows of nature, these Gods and Nymphs born of the sunbeam, the wave, the shadows on the hill.

“As with Rome I antedated the world of deeds, so I lived in those Greek forms the true faith of a

refined and intense childhood. So great was the force of reality with which these forms impressed me, that I prayed earnestly for a sign,—that it would lighten in some particular region of the heavens, or that I might find a bunch of grapes in the path, when I went forth in the morning. But no sign was given, and I was left a waif stranded upon the shores of modern life !

“Of the Greek language, I knew only enough to feel that the sounds told the same story as the mythology ;—that the law of life in that land was beauty, as in Rome it was a stern composure. I wish I had learned as much of Greece as of Rome, —so freely does the mind play in her sunny waters, where there is no chill, and the restraint is from within out ; for these Greeks, in an atmosphere of ample grace, could not be impetuous, or stern, but loved moderation, as equable life always must, for it is the law of beauty.

“With these books I passed my days. The great amount of study exacted of me soon ceased to be a burden, and reading became a habit and a passion. The force of feeling, which, under other circumstances, might have ripened thought, was turned to learn the thoughts of others. This was

not a tame state, for the energies brought out by rapid acquisition gave glow enough. I thought with rapture of the all-accomplished man, him of the many talents, wide resources, clear sight, and omnipotent will. A Cæsar seemed great enough. I did not then know that such men impoverish the treasury to build the palace. I kept their statues as belonging to the hall of my ancestors, and loved to conquer obstacles, and fed my youth and strength for their sake.

“Still, though this bias was so great that in earliest years I learned, in these ways, how the world takes hold of a powerful nature, I had yet other experiences. None of these were deeper than what I found in the happiest haunt of my childish years,—our little garden. Our house, though comfortable, was very ugly, and in a neighbourhood which I detested,—every dwelling and its appurtenances having a *mesquin* and huddled look. I liked nothing about us except the tall graceful elms before the house, and the dear little garden behind. Our back door opened on a high flight of steps, by which I went down to a green plot, much injured in my ambitious eyes by the presence of the pump and tool-house. This

opened into a little garden, full of choice flowers and fruit-trees, which was my mother's delight, and was carefully kept. Here I felt at home. A gate opened thence into the fields,—a wooden gate made of boards, in a high, unpainted board wall, and embowered in the clematis creeper. This gate I used to open to see the sunset heaven; beyond this black frame I did not step, for I liked to look at the deep gold behind it. How exquisitely happy I was in its beauty, and how I loved the silvery wreaths of my protecting vine! I never would pluck one of its flowers at that time, I was so jealous of its beauty, but often since I carry off wreaths of it from the wild-wood, and it stands in nature to my mind as the emblem of domestic love.

“Of late I have thankfully felt what I owe to that garden, where the best hours of my lonely childhood were spent. Within the house everything was socially utilitarian; my books told of a proud world, but in another temper were the teachings of the little garden. There my thoughts could lie callow in the nest, and only be fed and kept warm, not called to fly or sing before the time. I loved to gaze on the roses, the violets,

the lilies, the pinks ; my mother's hand had planted them, and they bloomed for me. I culled the most beautiful. I looked at them on every side. I kissed them, I pressed them to my bosom with passionate emotions, such as I have never dared express to any human being. An ambition swelled my heart to be as beautiful, as perfect as they. I have not kept my vow. Yet, forgive, ye wild asters, which gleam so sadly amid the fading grass ; forgive me, ye golden autumn flowers, which so strive to reflect the glories of the departing distant sun ; and ye silvery flowers, whose moonlight eyes I knew so well, forgive ! Living and blooming in your unchecked law, ye know nothing of the blights, the distortions, which beset the human being ; and which at such hours it would seem that no glories of free agency could ever repay !

“ There was, in the house, no apartment appropriated to the purpose of a library, but there was in my father's room a large closet filled with books, and to these I had free access when the task-work of the day was done. Its window overlooked wide fields, gentle slopes, a rich and smiling country, whose aspect pleased without

much occupying the eye, while a range of blue hills, rising at about twelve miles distance, allured to reverie. ‘Distant mountains,’ says Tieck, ‘excite the fancy, for beyond them we place the scene of our Paradise.’ Thus, in the poems of fairy adventure, we climb the rocky barrier, pass fearless its dragon caves and dark pine forests, and find the scene of enchantment in the vale behind. My hopes were never so definite, but my eye was constantly allured to that distant blue range, and I would sit, lost in fancies, till tears fell on my cheek. I loved this sadness; but only in later years, when the realities of life had taught me moderation, did the passionate emotions excited by seeing them again teach how glorious were the hopes that swelled my heart while gazing on them in those early days.

“Melancholy attends on the best joys of a merely ideal life, else I should call most happy the hours in the garden, the hours in the book closet. Here were the best French writers of the last century; for my father had been more than half a Jacobin, in the time when the French Republic cast its glare of promise over the world. Here, too, were the Queen Anne authors, his

models, and the English novelists; but among them I found none that charmed me. Smollett, Fielding, and the like, deal too broadly with the coarse actualities of life. The best of their men and women—so merely natural, with the nature found every day—do not meet our hopes. Sometimes the simple picture, warm with life and the light of the common sun, cannot fail to charm,—as in the wedded love of Fielding’s *Amelia*,—but it is at a later day, when the mind is trained to comparison, that we learn to prize excellence like this as it deserves. Early youth is prince-like: it will bend only to ‘the king, my father.’ Various kinds of excellence please, and leave their impression, but the most commanding, alone, is duly acknowledged at that all-exacting age.

“Three great authors it was my fortune to meet at this important period,—all, though of unequal, yet congenial powers,—all of rich and wide, rather than aspiring genius,—all free to the extent of the horizon their eye took in,—all fresh with impulse, racy with experience; never to be lost sight of, or superseded, but always to be apprehended more and more.

“Ever memorable is the day on which I first took a volume of SHAKSPEARE in my hand to read. It was on a Sunday.

“—This day was punctiliously set apart in our house. We had family prayers, for which there was no time on other days. Our dinners were different, and our clothes. We went to church. My father put some limitations on my reading, but,—bless him for the gentleness which has left me a pleasant feeling for the day!—he did not prescribe what was, but only what was *not*, to be done. And the liberty this left was a large one. ‘You must not read a novel, or a play;’ but all other books, the worst, or the best, were open to me. The distinction was merely technical. The day was pleasing to me, as relieving me from the routine of tasks and recitations; it gave me freer play than usual, and there were fewer things occurred in its course, which reminded me of the divisions of time; still the church-going, where I heard nothing that had any connexion with my inward life, and these rules, gave me associations with the day of empty formalities, and arbitrary restrictions; but though the forbidden book or walk always seemed more charming then, I was seldom tempted to disobey.—

“ This Sunday—I was only eight years old—I took from the book-shelf a volume lettered SHAKSPEARE. It was not the first time I had looked at it, but before I had been deterred from attempting to read, by the broken appearance along the page, and preferred smooth narrative. But this time I held in my hand ‘ Romeo and Juliet’ long enough to get my eye fastened to the page. It was a cold winter afternoon. I took the book to the parlour fire, and had there been seated an hour or two, when my father looked up and asked what I was reading so intently. ‘ Shakspeare,’ replied the child, merely raising her eye from the page. ‘ Shakspeare,—that won’t do; that’s no book for Sunday; go put it away and take another.’ I went as I was bid, but took no other. Returning to my seat, the unfinished story, the personages to whom I was but just introduced, thronged and burnt my brain. I could not bear it long; such a lure it was impossible to resist. I went and brought the book again. There were several guests present, and I had got half through the play before I again attracted attention. ‘ What is that child about that she don’t hear a word that’s said to her?’ quoth my aunt. ‘ What are you reading?’ said my father. ‘ Shakspeare’ was

again the reply, in a clear, though somewhat impatient, tone. ‘How?’ said my father angrily, —then restraining himself before his guests,— ‘Give me the book and go directly to bed.’

“ Into my little room no care of his anger followed me. Alone, in the dark, I thought only of the scene placed by the poet before my eye, where the free flow of life, sudden and graceful dialogue, and forms, whether grotesque or fair, seen in the broad lustre of his imagination, gave just what I wanted, and brought home the life I seemed born to live. My fancies swarmed like bees, as I contrived the rest of the story;—what all would do, what say, where go. My confinement tortured me. I could not go forth from this prison to ask after these friends; I could not make my pillow of the dreams about them which yet I could not forbear to frame. Thus was I absorbed when my father entered. He felt it right, before going to rest, to reason with me about my disobedience, shown in a way, as he considered, so insolent. I listened, but could not feel interested in what he said, nor turn my mind from what engaged it. He went away really grieved at my impenitence, and quite at a loss to understand conduct in me so unusual.

“ — Often since I have seen the same misunderstanding between parent and child,—the parent thrusting the morale, the discipline, of life upon the child, when just engrossed by some game of real importance and great leadings to it. That is only a wooden horse to the father,—the child was careering to distant scenes of conquest and crusade, through a country of elsewhere unimagined beauty. None but poets remember their youth; but the father who does not retain poetical apprehension of the world, free and splendid as it stretches out before the child, who cannot read his natural history, and follow out its intimations with reverence, must be a tyrant in his home, and the purest intentions will not prevent his doing much to cramp him. Each new child is a new Thought, and has bearings and discernings, which the Thoughts older in date know not yet, but must learn.—

“ My attention thus fixed on Shakspeare, I returned to him at every hour I could command. Here was a counterpoise to my Romans, still more forcible than the little garden. My author could read the Roman nature too,—read it in the sternness of Coriolanus, and in the varied wealth of

Cæsar. But he viewed these men of will as only one kind of men ; he kept them in their place, and I found that he, who could understand the Roman, yet expressed in Hamlet a deeper thought.

“ In CERVANTES, I found far less productive talent indeed, a far less powerful genius—but the same wide wisdom, a discernment piercing the shows and symbols of existence, yet rejoicing in them all, both for their own life, and as signs of the unseen reality. Not that Cervantes philosophised—his genius was too deeply philosophical for that ; he took things as they came before him, and saw their actual relations and bearings. Thus the work he produced was of deep meaning, though he might never have expressed that meaning to himself. It was left implied in the whole. A Coleridge comes and calls Don Quixote the pure Reason, and Sancho the Understanding. Cervantes made no such distinctions in his own mind ; but he had seen and suffered enough to bring out all his faculties, and to make him comprehend the higher as well as the lower part of our nature. Sancho is too amusing and sagacious to be contemptible ; the Don too noble and clear-sighted

towards absolute truth, to be ridiculous. And we are pleased to see manifested in this way, how the lower must follow and serve the higher, despite its jeering mistrust and the stubborn realities which break up the plans of this pure-minded champion.

“The effect produced on the mind is nowise that described by Byron :—

“Cervantes smiled Spain’s chivalry away,” &c.

On the contrary, who is not conscious of a sincere reverence for the Don, prancing forth on his gaunt steed? Who would not rather be him than any of the persons who laugh at him?—Yet the one we would wish to be is thyself, Cervantes, unconquerable spirit! gaining flavour and colour, like wine, from every change, while being carried round the world; in whose eye the serene sagacious laughter could not be dimmed by poverty, slavery, or unsuccessful authorship. Thou art to us still more the man, though less the genius, than Shakspeare; thou dost not evade our sight, but, holding the lamp to thine own magic shows, dost enjoy them with us.

“My third friend was MOLIERE, one very much lower, both in range and depth, than the others,

but, as far as he goes, of the same character. Nothing secluded or partial is there about his genius—a man of the world, and a man by himself, as he is. It was, indeed, only the poor social world of Paris that he saw, but he viewed it from the firm foundations of his manhood, and every lightest laugh rings from a clear perception, and teaches life anew.

“ These men were all alike in this—they loved the *natural history* of man. Not what he should be, but what he is, was the favourite subject of their thought. Whenever a noble leading opened to the eye new paths of light, they rejoiced ; but it was never fancy, but always fact, that inspired them. They loved a thorough penetration of the murkiest dens, and most tangled paths of nature ; they did not spin from the desires of their own special natures, but reconstructed the world from materials which they collected on every side. Thus their influence upon me was not to prompt me to follow out thought in myself so much as to detect it everywhere ; for each of these men is not only a nature, but a happy interpreter of many natures. They taught me to distrust all invention which is not based on a wide experience. Perhaps, too, they taught me to overvalue an outward experience

at the expense of inward growth ; but all this I did not appreciate till later.

“ It will be seen that my youth was not unfriended, since those great minds came to me in kindness. A moment of action in one’s self, however, is worth an age of apprehension through others ; not that our deeds are better, but that they produce a renewal of our being. I have had more productive moments and of deeper joy, but never hours of more tranquil pleasure, than those in which these demi-gods visited me,—and with a smile so familiar, that I imagined the world to be full of such. They did me good, for by them a standard was early given of sight and thought, from which I could never go back, and beneath which I cannot suffer patiently my own life, or that of any friend, to fall. They did me harm, too, for the child fed with meat instead of milk becomes too soon mature. Expectations and desires were thus early raised, after which I must long toil before they can be realized. How poor the scene around, how tame one’s own existence, how meagre and faint every power, with these beings in my mind ! Often I must cast them quite aside in order to grow in my small way, and

not sink into despair. Certainly, I do not wish, that instead of these masters I had read baby books, written down to children, and with such ignorant dulness that they blunt the senses and corrupt the tastes of the still plastic human being. But I do wish that I had read no books at all till later—that I had lived with toys, and played in the open air. Children should not cull the fruits of reflection and observation early, but expand in the sun, and let thoughts come to them. They should not through books antedate their actual experiences, but should take them gradually, as sympathy and interpretation are needed. With me, much of life was devoured in the bud.

FIRST FRIEND.

“ For a few months, this bookish and solitary life was invaded by interest in a living, breathing figure. At church, I used to look around with a feeling of coldness and disdain, which, though I now well understand its causes, seems to my wiser mind as odious as it was unnatural. The puny child sought everywhere for the Roman or Shakspeare figures, and she was met by the shrewd honest eye, the homely decency, or the smartness

of a New England village on Sunday. There was beauty, but I could not see it then ; it was not of the kind I longed for. In the next pew sat a family who were my especial aversion. There were five daughters, the eldest not above four-and-twenty, yet they had the old fairy, knowing look, hard, dry, dwarfed, strangers to the All-Fair—were working-day residents in this beautiful planet. They looked as if their thoughts had never strayed beyond the jobs of the day, and they were glad of it. Their mother was one of those shrunken, faded patterns of woman who have never done anything to keep smooth the cheek and dignify the brow. The father had a Scotch look of shrewd narrowness, and entire self-complacency. I could not endure this family, whose existence contradicted all my visions ; yet I could not forbear looking at them.

“ As my eye one day was ranging about with its accustomed coldness, and the proudly foolish sense of being in a shroud of thoughts that were not their thoughts, it was arrested by a face most fair, and well-known, as it seemed at first glance—for surely I had met her before, and waited for her long. But soon I saw that she was a new apparition foreign to that scene, if not to me. Her dress

—the arrangement of her hair, which had the graceful pliancy of races highly cultivated for long, —the intelligent and full picture of her eye, whose reserve was in its self-possession, not in timidity—all combined to make up a whole impression, which, though too young to understand, I was well prepared to feel.

“How wearisome now appears that thoroughbred *millefleur* beauty, the distilled result of ages of European culture! Give me rather the wild heath on the lonely hill-side, than such a rose-tree from the daintily clipped garden. But, then, I had but tasted the cup, and knew not how little it could satisfy; more, more, was all my cry; continued through years, till I had been at the very fountain. Indeed, it was a ruby-red, a perfumed draught, and I need not abuse the wine because I prefer water, but merely say I have had enough of it. Then, the first sight, the first knowledge of such a person was intoxication.

“She was an English lady, who, by a singular chance, was cast upon this region for a few months. Elegant and captivating, her every look and gesture was tuned to a different pitch from anything I had ever known. She was in various

ways ‘accomplished,’ as it is called, though to what degree I cannot now judge. She painted in oils;—I had never before seen any one use the brush, and days would not have been too long for me to watch the pictures growing beneath her hand. She played the harp: and its tones are still to me the heralds of the promised land I saw before me then. She rose, she looked, she spoke; and the gentle swaying motion she made all through life has gladdened memory, as the stream does the woods and meadows.

“As she was often at the house of one of our neighbours, and afterwards at our own, my thoughts were fixed on her with all the force of my nature. It was my first real interest in my kind, and it engrossed me wholly. I had seen her,—I should see her,—and my mind lay steeped in the visions that flowed from this source. My task-work I went through with, as I have done on similar occasions all my life, aided by pride that could not bear to fail, or be questioned. Could I cease from doing the work of the day, and hear the reason sneeringly given,—‘Her head is so completely taken up with —— that she can do nothing?’ Impossible.

“Should the first love be blighted, they say, the mind loses its sense of eternity. All forms of existence seem fragile, the prison of time real, for a god is dead. Equally true is this of friendship. I thank Heaven that this first feeling was permitted its free flow. The years that lay between the woman and the girl only brought her beauty into perspective, and enabled me to see her as I did the mountains from my window, and made her presence to me a gate of Paradise. That which she was, that which she brought, that which she might have brought, were mine, and over a whole region of new life I ruled proprietor of the soil in my own right.

“Her mind was sufficiently unoccupied to delight in my warm devotion. She could not know what it was to me, but the light cast by the flame through so delicate a vase cheered and charmed her. All who saw admired her in their way ; but she would lightly turn her head from their hard or oppressive looks, and fix a glance of full-eyed sweetness on the child, who, from a distance, watched all her looks and motions. She did not say much to me—not much to any one ; she spoke in her whole being rather than by chosen words.

Indeed, her proper speech was dance or song, and what was less expressive did not greatly interest her. But she saw much, having in its perfection the woman's delicate sense for sympathies and attractions. We walked in the fields, alone. Though others were present, her eyes were gliding over all the field and plain for the objects of beauty to which she was of kin. She was not cold to her seeming companions; a sweet courtesy satisfied them, but it hung about her like her mantle that she wore without thinking of it; her thoughts were free, for these civilized beings can live really two lives at the same moment. With them she seemed to be, but her hand was given to the child at her side; others did not observe me, but to her I was the only human presence. Like a guardian spirit she led me through the fields and groves, and every tree, every bird greeted me, and said, what I felt, 'She is the first angel of your life.'

"One time I had been passing the afternoon with her. She had been playing to me on the harp, and I sat listening in happiness almost unbearable. Some guests were announced. She went into another room to receive them, and I

took up her book. It was *Guy Mannering*, then lately published, and the first of Scott's novels I had ever seen. I opened where her mark lay, and read merely with the feeling of continuing our mutual existence by passing my eyes over the same page where hers had been. It was the description of the rocks on the sea-coast where the little Harry Bertram was lost. I had never seen such places, and my mind was vividly stirred to imagine them. The scene rose before me, very unlike reality, doubtless, but majestic and wild. I was the little Harry Bertram, and had lost her,—all I had to lose,—and sought her vainly in long dark caves that had no end, plashing through the water; while the crags beetled above, threatening to fall and crush the poor child. Absorbed in the painful vision, tears rolled down my cheeks. Just then she entered with light step, and full-beaming eye. When she saw me thus, a soft cloud stole over her face, and clothed every feature with a lovelier tenderness than I had seen there before. She did not question, but fixed on me inquiring looks of beautiful love. I laid my head against her shoulder and wept,—dimly feeling that I must lose her and all,—all

who spoke to me of the same things,—that the cold wave must rush over me. She waited till my tears were spent, then rising, took from a little box a bunch of golden amaranths or everlasting flowers, and gave them to me. They were very fragrant. ‘They came,’ she said, ‘from Madeira.’ These flowers stayed with me seventeen years. ‘Madeira’ seemed to me the fortunate isle, apart in the blue ocean from all of ill or dread. Whenever I saw a sail passing in the distance,—if it bore itself with fulness of beautiful certainty,—I felt that it was going to Madeira. Those thoughts are all gone now. No Madeira exists for me now,—no fortunate purple isle,—and all these hopes and fancies are lifted from the sea into the sky. Yet I thank the charms that fixed them here so long,—fixed them till perfumes like those of the golden flowers were drawn from the earth, teaching me to know my birth-place.

“I can tell little else of this time,—indeed, I remember little, except the state of feeling in which I lived. For I *lived*, and when this is the case, there is little to tell in the form of thought. We meet—at least those who are true to their instincts meet—a succession of persons through

our lives, all of whom have some peculiar errand to us. There is an outer circle, whose existence we perceive, but with whom we stand in no real relation. They tell us the news, they act on us in the offices of society, they show us kindness and aversion; but their influence does not penetrate; we are nothing to them, nor they to us, except as a part of the world's furniture. Another circle, within this, are dear and near to us. We know them and of what kind they are. They are to us not mere facts, but intelligible thoughts of the divine mind. We like to see how they are unfolded; we like to meet them and part from them; we like their action upon us and the pause that succeeds and enables us to appreciate its quality. Often we leave them on our path, and return no more, but we bear them in our memory, tales which have been told, and whose meaning has been felt.

“But yet a nearer group there are, beings born under the same star, and bound with us in a common destiny. These are not mere acquaintances, mere friends, but, when we meet, are sharers of our very existence. There is no separation: the same thought is given at the same

moment to both,—indeed, it is born of the meeting, and would not otherwise have been called into existence at all. These not only know themselves more, but *are* more for having met, and regions of their being, which would else have laid sealed in cold obstruction, burst into leaf and bloom and song.

“The times of these meetings are fated, nor will either party be able ever to meet any other person in the same way. Both seem to rise at a glance into that part of the heavens where the word can be spoken, by which they are revealed to one another and to themselves. The step in being thus gained, can never be lost, nor can it be retrod; for neither party will be again what the other wants. They are no longer fit to interchange mutual influence, for they do not really need it; and if they think they do, it is because they weakly pine after a past pleasure.

“To this inmost circle of relations but few are admitted, because some prejudice or lack of courage has prevented the many from listening to their instincts the first time they manifested themselves. If the voice is once disregarded, it becomes fainter each time, till, at last, it is wholly silenced,

and the man lives in this world a stranger to its real life, deluded like the maniac who fancies he has attained his throne, while in reality he is on a bed of musty straw. Yet, if the voice finds a listener and servant the first time of speaking, it is encouraged to more and more clearness. Thus it was with me,—from no merit of mine, but because I had the good fortune to be free enough to yield to my impressions. Common ties had not bound me; there were no traditionary notions in my mind; I believed in nothing merely because others believed in it; I had taken no feelings on trust. Thus my mind was open to their sway.

“ This woman came to me, a star from the east, a morning star, and I worshipped her. She too was elevated by that worship, and her fairest self called out. To the mind she brought assurance that there was a region congenial with its tendencies and tastes, a region of elegant culture and intercourse, whose object, fulfilled or not, was to gratify the sense of beauty, not the mere utilities of life. In our relation she was lifted to the top of her being. She had known many celebrities had roused to passionate desire many hearts, and became afterwards a wife; but I do not believe

she ever more truly realized her best self than towards the lonely child whose heaven she was, whose eye she met, and whose possibilities she predicted. 'He raised me,' said a woman inspired by love, 'upon the pedestal of his own high thoughts, and wings came at once, but I did not fly away. I stood there with downcast eyes, worthy of his love, for he had made me so.'

"Thus we do always for those who inspire us to expect from them the best. That which they are able to be, they become, because we demand it of them. 'We expect the impossible—and find it.'

"My English friend went across the sea. She passed into her former life, and into ties that engrossed her days. But she has never ceased to think of me. Her thoughts turn forcibly back to the child who was to her all she saw of the really New World. On the promised coasts she had found only cities, careful men and women, the aims and habits of ordinary life in her own land, without that elegant culture which she, probably, over-estimated, because it was her home. But in the mind of the child she found the fresh prairie, the untrodden forests for which she had longed. I saw in her the storied castles, the fair stately

parks, and the wind laden with tones from the past, which I desired to know. We wrote to one another for many years;—her shallow and delicate epistles did not disenchant me, nor did she fail to see something of the old poetry in my rude characters and stammering speech. But we must never meet again.

“ When this friend was withdrawn, I fell into a profound depression. I knew not how to exert myself, but lay bound hand and foot. Melancholy enfolded me in an atmosphere, as joy had done. This suffering, too, was out of the gradual and natural course. Those who are really children could not know such love, or feel such sorrow. ‘I am to blame,’ said my father, ‘in keeping her at home so long merely to please myself. She needs to be with other girls, needs play and variety. She does not seem to me really sick, but dull rather. She eats nothing, you say. I see she grows thin. She ought to change the scene.’

“ I was indeed *dull*. The books, the garden, had lost all charm. I had the excuse of headache, constantly, for not attending to my lessons. The light of life was set, and every leaf was withered. At such an early age there are no back or side

scenes where the mind, weary and sorrowful, may retreat. Older, we realize the width of the world more, and it is not easy to despair on any point. The effort at thought to which we are compelled, relieves and affords a dreary retreat, like hiding in a brick-kiln till the shower be over. But then, all joy seemed to have departed with my friend, and the emptiness of our house stood revealed. This I had not felt while I every day expected to see or had seen her, or annoyance and dulness were unnoticed or swallowed up in the one thought that clothed my days with beauty. But now she was gone, and I was roused from habits of reading or reverie to feel the fiery temper of the soul, and to learn that it must have vent, that it would not be pacified by shadows, neither meet without consuming what lay around it. I avoided the table as much as possible, took long walks, and lay in bed or on the floor of my room. I complained of my head; and it was not wrong to do so, for a sense of dulness and suffocation, if not pain, was there constantly.

“But when it was proposed that I should go to school, that was a remedy I could not listen to with patience for a moment. The peculiarity of

my education had separated me entirely from the girls around, except that when they were playing at active games, I would sometimes go out and join them. I liked violent bodily exercise, which always relieved my nerves. But I had no success in associating with them beyond the mere play. Not only I was not their schoolmate, but my book-life and lonely habits had given a cold aloofness to my whole expression, and veiled my manner with a hauteur which turned all hearts away. Yet, as this reserve was superficial, and rather ignorance than arrogance, it produced no deep dislike. Besides, the girls supposed me really superior to themselves, and did not hate me for feeling it; but neither did they like me, nor wish to have me with them. Indeed, I had gradually given up all such wishes myself; for they seemed to me rude, tiresome, and childish, as I did to them dull and strange. This experience had been earlier, before I was admitted to any real friendship; but now that I had been lifted into the life of mature years, and into just that atmosphere of European life to which I had before been tending, the thought of sending me to school filled me with disgust.

“ Yet what could I tell my father of such

feelings? I resisted all I could, but in vain. He had no faith in medical aid generally, and justly saw that this was no occasion for its use. He thought I needed change of scene, and to be roused to activity by other children. 'I have kept you at home,' he said, 'because I took such pleasure in teaching you myself; and besides, I knew that you would learn faster with one who is so desirous to aid you. But you will learn fast enough wherever you are, and you ought to be more with others of your own age. I shall soon hear that you are better, I trust.'"

SCHOOL-LIFE.

THE school to which Margaret was sent was that of the Misses Prescott, in Groton, Massachusetts. And her experience there has been described with touching truthfulness by herself, in the story of "Mariana." *

"At first her schoolmates were captivated with her ways; her love of wild dances and sudden song, her freaks of passion and of wit. She was always new, always surprising, and, for a time, charming.

* Summer on the Lakes, p. 81.

“ But after a while, they tired of her. She could never be depended on to join in their plans, yet she expected them to follow out hers with their whole strength. She was very loving, even infatuated in her own affections, and exacted from those who had professed any love for her the devotion she was willing to bestow.

“ Yet there was a vein of haughty caprice in her character, and a love of solitude, which made her at times wish to retire apart; and at these times she would expect to be entirely understood, and let alone, yet to be welcomed back when she returned. She did not thwart others in their humours, but she never doubted of great indulgence from them.

“ Some singular habits she had, which, when new, charmed; but, after acquaintance, displeased her companions. She had by nature the same habit and power of excitement that is described in the spinning dervishes of the East. Like them she would spin until all around her were giddy, while her own brain, instead of being disturbed, was excited to great action. Pausing, she would declaim verses of others, or her own, or act many parts, with strange catchwords and burdens, that

seemed to act with mystical power on her own fancy, sometimes stimulating her to convulse the hearers with laughter, sometimes to melt them to tears. When her power began to languish, she would spin again till fired to re-commence her singular drama, into which she wove figures from the scenes of her earlier childhood, her companions, and the dignitaries she sometimes saw, with fantasies unknown to life, unknown to heaven or earth.

“ This excitement, as may be supposed, was not good for her. It usually came on in the evening, and often spoiled her sleep. She would wake in the night, and cheat her restlessness by inventions that teased, while they sometimes diverted her companions.

“ She was also a sleep-walker; and this one trait of her case did somewhat alarm her guardians, who otherwise showed the profound ignorance as to this peculiar being, usual in the overseeing of the young. They consulted a physician, who said she would outgrow it, and prescribed a milk diet.

“ Meantime, the fever of this ardent and too early stimulated nature was constantly increased

by the restraints and narrow routine of the boarding-school. She was always devising means to break in upon it. She had a taste—which would have seemed ludicrous to her mates, if they had not felt some awe of her, from the touch of genius and power that never left her—for costume and fancy dresses. There was always some sash twisted about her, some drapery, something odd in the arrangement of her hair and dress; so that the methodical preceptress dared not let her go out without a careful scrutiny and remodelling, whose soberizing effects generally disappeared the moment she was in the free air.

“ At last a vent was assured for her in private theatricals. Play followed play, and in these and the rehearsals, she found entertainment congenial with her. The principal parts, as a matter of course, fell to her lot; most of the good suggestions and arrangements came from her; and, for a time, she ruled mostly, and shone triumphant.

“ During these performances, the girls had heightened their bloom with artificial red; this was delightful to them, it was something so out of the way. But Mariana, after the plays were over, kept her carmine saucer on the dressing-table, and

put on her blushes, regularly as the morning. When stared and jeered at, she at first said she did it because she thought it made her look pretty; but, after a while, she became petulant about it,—would make no reply to any joke, but merely kept up the habit.

“ This irritated the girls, as all eccentricity does the world in general, more than vice or malignity. They talked it over among themselves till they were wrought up to a desire of punishing, once for all, this sometimes amusing, but so often provoking non-conformist. And having obtained leave of the mistress, they laid with great glee, a plan, one evening, which was to be carried into execution next day at dinner.

“ Among Mariana’s irregularities was a great aversion to the meal-time ceremonial,—so long, so tiresome, she found it, to be seated at a certain moment, and to wait while each one was served, at so large a table, where there was scarcely any conversation; and from day to day it became more heavy to sit there, or go there at all; often as possible she excused herself on the ever-convenient plea of headache, and was hardly ever ready when the dinner-bell rang.

“To-day the summons found her on the balcony, but gazing on the beautiful prospect. I have heard her say afterwards, that she had scarcely in her life been so happy,—and she was one with whom happiness was a still rapture. It was one of the most blessed summer days : the shadows of great white clouds empurpled the distant hills for a few moments, only to leave them more golden ; the tall grass of the wide fields waved in the softest breeze. Pure blue were the heavens, and the same hue of pure contentment was in the heart of Mariana.

“ Suddenly on her bright mood jarred the dinner-bell. At first rose her usual thought, I will not, cannot go ; and then the *must*, which daily life can always enforce, even upon the butterflies and birds, came, and she walked reluctantly to her room. She merely changed her dress, and never thought of adding the artificial rose to her cheek.

When she took her seat in the dining-hall, and was asked if she would be helped, raising her eyes, she saw the person who asked her was deeply rouged, with a bright glaring spot, perfectly round, on either cheek. She looked at the next,—same apparition ! She then slowly passed her eyes down the whole line, and saw the same, with a suppressed

smile distorting every countenance. Catching the design at once, she deliberately looked along her own side of the table, at every schoolmate in turn ; every one had joined in the trick. The teachers strove to be grave, but she saw they enjoyed the joke. The servants could not suppress a titter.

“ When Warren Hastings stood at the bar of Westminster Hall,—when the Methodist preacher walked through a line of men, each of whom greeted him with a brickbat or rotten egg,—they had some preparation for the crisis, though it might be very difficult to meet it with an impassible brow. Our little girl was quite unprepared to find herself in the midst of a world which despised her, and triumphed in her disgrace.

“ She had ruled like a queen, in the midst of her companions ; she had shed her animation through their lives, and loaded them with prodigal favours, nor once suspected that a popular favourite might not be loved. Now she felt that she had been but a dangerous plaything in the hands of those whose hearts she never had doubted.

“ Yet the occasion found her equal to it, for Mariana had the kind of spirit which, in a better cause, had made the Roman matron truly say of

her death-wound, 'It is not painful, Pætus.' She did not blench,—she did not change countenance. She swallowed her dinner with apparent composure. She made remarks to those near her, as if she had no eyes.

“The wrath of the foe, of course, rose higher, and the moment they were freed from the restraints of the dining-room, they all ran off, gayly calling, and sarcastically laughing, with backward glances, at Mariana, left alone.

“Alone she went to her room, locked the door and threw herself on the floor in strong convulsions. These had sometimes threatened her life, in earlier childhood, but of later years she had outgrown them. School-hours came, and she was not there. A little girl, sent to her door, could get no answer. The teachers became alarmed, and broke it open. Bitter was their penitence, and that of her companions, at the state in which they found her. For some hours terrible anxiety was felt, but at last nature, exhausted, relieved herself by a deep slumber.

“From this Mariana arose an altered being. She made no reply to the expressions of sorrow from her companions, none to the grave and kind,

but undiscerning, comments of her teacher. She did not name the source of her anguish, and its poisoned dart sank deeply in. This was the thought which stung her so:—‘What, not one, not a single one, in the hour of trial, to take my part? not one who refused to take part against me?’ Past words of love, and caresses, little heeded at the time, rose to her memory, and gave fuel to her distempered heart. Beyond the sense of burning resentment at universal perfidy, she could not get. And Mariana, born for love, now hated all the world.

“The change, however, which these feelings made in her conduct and appearance, bore no such construction to the careless observer. Her gay freaks were quite gone, her wildness, her invention. Her dress was uniform, her manner much subdued. Her chief interest seemed to be now in her studies, and in music. Her companions she never sought; but they, partly from uneasy, remorseful feelings, partly that they really liked her much better now that she did not puzzle and oppress them, sought her continually. And here the black shadow comes upon her life, the only stain upon the history of Mariana.

“They talked to her, as girls having few topics naturally do, of one another. Then the demon rose within her, and spontaneously, without design, generally without words of positive falsehood, she became a genius of discord amongst them. She fanned those flames of envy and jealousy which a wise, true word from a third person will often quench for ever; and by a glance, or seemingly light reply, she planted the seeds of dissension, till there was scarcely a peaceful affection, or sincere intimacy, in the circle where she lived, and could not but rule, for she was one whose nature was to that of the others as fire to clay.

“It was at this time that I came to the school, and first saw Mariana. Me she charmed at once, for I was a sentimental child, who, in my early ill health, had been indulged in reading novels, till I had no eyes for the common. It was not, however, easy to approach her. Did I offer to run and fetch her handkerchief, she was obliged to go to her room, and would rather do it herself. She did not like to have people turn over for her the leaves of the music-book as she played. Did I approach my stool to her feet, she moved away as if to give me room. The bunch of wild flowers

which I timidly laid beside her plate, was left untouched. After some weeks, my desire to attract her notice really preyed upon me; and one day, meeting her alone in the entry, I fell upon my knees, and, kissing her hand, cried, ‘O, Mariana, do let me love you, and try to love me a little!’ But my idol snatched away her hand, and, laughing wildly, ran into her room. After that day, her manner to me was not only cold, but repulsive, and I felt myself scorned.

“Perhaps four months had passed thus, when, one afternoon, it became obvious that something more than common was brewing. Dismay and mystery were written in many faces of the older girls; much whispering was going on in corners.

“In the evening, after prayers, the principal bade us stay; and, in a grave, sad voice, summoned forth Mariana to answer charges to be made against her.

“Mariana stood up, and leaned against the chimney-piece. Then eight of the older girls came forward, and preferred against her charges, alas! too well founded, of calumny and falsehood.

“At first, she defended herself with self-possession and eloquence. But when she found she

could no more resist the truth, she suddenly threw herself down, dashing her head with all her force against the iron hearth, on which a fire was burning, and was taken up senseless.

“ The affright of those present was great. Now that they had perhaps killed her, they reflected it would have been as well if they had taken warning from the former occasion, and approached very carefully a nature so capable of any extreme. After a while she revived, with a faint groan, amid the sobs of her companions. I was on my knees by the bed, and held her cold hand. One of those most aggrieved took it from me, to beg her pardon, and say it was impossible not to love her. She made no reply.

“ Neither that night, nor for several days, could a word be obtained from her, nor would she touch food ; but when it was presented to her, or any one drew near from any cause, she merely turned away her head, and gave no sign. The teacher saw that some terrible nervous affection had fallen upon her—that she grew more and more feverish. She knew not what to do.

“ Meanwhile, a new revolution had taken place in the mind of the passionate but nobly-tempered

child. All these months nothing but the sense of injury had rankled in her heart. She had gone on in one mood, doing what the demon prompted, without scruple and without fear.

“ But at the moment of detection, the tide ebbed, and the bottom of her soul lay revealed to her eye. How black, how stained, and sad ! Strange, strange, that she had not seen before the baseness and cruelty of falsehood, the loveliness of truth ! Now, amid the wreck, uprose the moral nature, which never before had attained the ascendant. ‘ But,’ she thought, ‘ too late sin is revealed to me in all its deformity, and sin-defiled, I will not, cannot live. The main-spring of life is broken.’

“ The lady who took charge of this sad child had never well understood her before, but had always looked on her with great tenderness. And now love seemed,—when all around were in the greatest distress, fearing to call in medical aid, fearing to do without it,—to teach her where the only balm was to be found that could heal the wounded spirit.

“ One night she came in, bringing a calming draught. Mariana was sitting as usual, her hair

loose, her dress the same robe they had put on her at first, her eyes fixed vacantly upon the whited wall. To the proffers and entreaties of her nurse, she made no reply.

“ The lady burst into tears, but Mariana did not seem even to observe it.

“ The lady then said, ‘ O, my child, do not despair ; do not think that one great fault can mar a whole life ! Let me trust you ; let me tell you the griefs of my sad life. I will tell you, Mariana, what I never expected to impart to any one.’

“ And so she told her tale. It was one of pain, of shame, borne not for herself, but for one near and dear as herself. Mariana knew the dignity and reserve of this lady’s nature. She had often admired to see how the cheek, lovely, but no longer young, mantled with the deepest blush of youth, and the blue eyes were cast down at any little emotion. She had understood the proud sensibility of her character. She fixed her eyes on those now raised to hers, bright with fast-falling tears. She heard the story to the end, and then, without saying a word, stretched out her hand for the cup.

“ She returned to life, but it was as one who had passed through the valley of death. The heart of stone was quite broken in her,—the fiery will fallen from flame to coal. When her strength was a little restored, she had all her companions summoned, and said to them,—‘ I deserved to die, but a generous trust has called me back to life. I will be worthy of it, nor ever betray the trust, or resent injury more. Can you forgive the past ?’

“ And they not only forgave, but, with love and earnest tears, clasped in their arms the returning sister. They vied with one another in offices of humble love to the humbled one ; and let it be recorded, as an instance of the pure honour of which young hearts are capable, that these facts, known to some forty persons, never, so far as I know, transpired beyond those walls.

“ It was not long after this that Mariana was summoned home. She went thither a wonderfully instructed being, though in ways those who had sent her forth to learn little dreamed of.

“ Never was forgotten the vow of the returning prodigal. Mariana could not *resent*, could not *play false*. The terrible crisis, which she so early passed through, probably prevented the world

from hearing much of her. A wild fire was tamed in that hour of penitence at the boarding-school, such as has oftentimes wrapped court and camp in a destructive glow."

SELF-CULTURE.

Letters written to the beloved teacher, who so wisely befriended Margaret in her trial hour, will best show how this high-spirited girl sought to enlarge and harmonize her powers.

"*Cambridge, July 11, 1825.*—Having excused myself from accompanying my honoured father to church, which I always do in the afternoon, when possible, I devote to you the hours which Ariosto and Helvetius ask of my eyes,—as, lying on my writing desk, they put me in mind that they must return this week to their owner.

"You keep me to my promise of giving you some sketch of my pursuits. I rise a little before five, walk an hour, and then practice on the piano, till seven, when we breakfast. Next I read French,—Sismondi's 'Literature of the South of Europe,'—till eight, then two or three lectures in Brown's 'Philosophy.' About half-past nine I go to Mr. Perkins's school and study Greek till twelve, when

the school being dismissed, I recite, go home, and practice again till dinner, at two. Sometimes, if the conversation is very agreeable, I lounge for half an hour over the dessert, though rarely so lavish of time. Then, when I can, I read two hours in Italian, but I am often interrupted. At six, I walk, or take a drive. Before going to bed, I play or sing, for half an hour or so, to make all sleepy, and, about eleven, retire to write a little while in my journal, exercises on what I have read, or a series of characteristics which I am filling up according to advice. Thus, you see, I am learning Greek, and making acquaintance with metaphysics, and French and Italian literature.

“ ‘ How,’ you will say, ‘ can I believe that my indolent, fanciful, pleasure-loving pupil, perseveres in such a course?’ I feel the power of industry growing every day, and, besides the all-powerful motive of ambition, and a new stimulus lately given through a friend, I have learned to believe that nothing, no ! not perfection, is unattainable. I am determined on distinction, which formerly I thought to win at an easy rate ; but now I see that long years of labour must be given to secure even the *succès de société*,—which, however, shall

never content me. I see multitudes of examples of persons of genius, utterly deficient in grace and the power of pleasurable excitement. I wish to combine both. I know the obstacles in my way. I am wanting in that intuitive tact and polish, which nature has bestowed upon some, but which I must acquire. And, on the other hand, my powers of intellect, though sufficient, I suppose, are not well disciplined. Yet all such hindrances may be overcome by an ardent spirit. If I fail, my consolation shall be found in active employment."

"*Cambridge, March 5, 1826.*—Duke Nicholas is to succeed the Emperor Alexander, thus relieving Europe from the sad apprehension of evil to be inflicted by the brutal Constantine, and yet depriving the Holy Alliance of its very soul. We may now hope more strongly for the liberties of unchained Europe; we look in anxious suspense for the issue of the struggle of Greece, the result of which seems to depend on the new autocrat. I have lately been reading Anastasius, the Greek Gil Blas, which has excited and delighted me; but I do not think you like works of this cast. You did not like my sombre and powerful Ormond,—though this is superior to Ormond in

every respect ; it translates you to another scene, hurls you into the midst of the burning passions of the East, whose vicissitudes are, however, interspersed by deep pauses of shadowy reflective scenes, which open upon you like the green watered little vales occasionally to be met with in the burning desert. There is enough of history to fix profoundly the attention, and prevent you from revolting from scenes profligate and terrific, and such characters as are never to be met with in our paler climes. How delighted am I to read a book which can absorb me to tears and shuddering,—not by individual traits of beauty, but by the spirit of adventure,—happiness which one seldom enjoys after childhood in this blest age, so philosophic, free, and enlightened to a miracle, but far removed from the ardent dreams and soft credulity of the world's youth. Sometimes I think I would give all our gains for those times when young and old gathered in the feudal hall, listening with soul-absorbing transport to the romance of the minstrel, unrestrained and regardless of criticism, and when they worshipped nature, not as high-dressed and pampered, but as just risen from the bath."

“ *Cambridge, May 14, 1826.*—I am studying Madame de Stael, Epictetus, Milton, Racine, and Castilian ballads, with great delight. There’s an assemblage for you. Now tell me, had you rather be the brilliant De Stael or the useful Edgeworth?—though De Stael is useful too, but it is on the grand scale, on liberalizing, regenerating principles, and has not the immediate practical success that Edgeworth has. I met with a parallel the other day between Byron and Rousseau, and had a mind to send it to you, it was so excellent.”

“ *Cambridge, Jan. 10, 1827.*—As to my studies, I am engrossed in reading the elder Italian poets, beginning with Berni, from whom I shall proceed to Pulci and Politian. I read very critically. Miss Francis* and I think of reading Locke, as introductory to a course of English metaphysics, and then De Stael on Locke’s system. Allow me to introduce this lady to you as a most interesting woman, in my opinion. She is a natural person, —a most rare thing in this age of cant and pretension. Her conversation is charming, — she brings all her powers to bear upon it; her style is varied, and she has a very pleasant and spirited

* Lydia Maria Child.

way of thinking. I should judge, too, that she possesses peculiar purity of mind. I am going to spend this evening with her, and wish you were to be with us."

"*Cambridge, Jan. 3, 1828.*—I am reading Sir William Temple's works, with great pleasure. Such enlarged views are rarely to be found combined with such acuteness and discrimination. His style, though diffuse, is never verbose or overloaded, but beautifully expressive; 'tis English, too, though he was an accomplished linguist, and wrote much and well in French, Spanish, and Latin. The latter he used, as he says of the Bishop of Munster, (with whom he corresponded in that tongue,) 'more like a man of the court and of business than a scholar.' He affected not Augustan niceties, but his expressions are free and appropriate. I have also read a most entertaining book, which I advise you to read, (if you have not done so already,) Russell's Tour in Germany. There you will find more intelligent and detailed accounts than I have seen anywhere of the state of the German universities, Viennese court, secret associations, Plica Polonica, and their very interesting matters. There is a minute

account of the representative government given to his subjects by the Duke of Weimar. I have passed a luxurious afternoon, having been in bed from dinner till tea, reading Rammohun Roy's book, and framing dialogues aloud on every argument beneath the sun. Really, I have not had my mind so exercised for months; and I have felt a gladiatorial disposition lately, and don't enjoy mere light conversation. The love of knowledge is prodigiously kindled within my soul of late; I study much and reflect more, and feel an aching wish for some person with whom I might talk fully and openly.

“Did you ever read the letters and reflections of Prince de Ligne, the most agreeable man of his day? I have just had it, and if it is new to you, I recommend it as an agreeable book to read at night just before you go to bed. There is much curious matter concerning Catharine II.'s famous expedition into Taurida, which puts down some of the romantic stories prevalent on that score, but relates more surprising realities. Also it gives much interesting information about that noble philosopher, Joseph II., and about the Turkish tactics and national character.”

“*Cambridge, Jan. 1830.* You need not fear to revive painful recollections. I often think of those sad experiences. True, they agitate me deeply. But it was best so. They have had a most powerful effect on my character. I tremble at whatever looks like dissimulation. The remembrance of that evening subdues every proud, passionate impulse. My beloved supporter in those sorrowful hours, your image shines as fair to my mind’s eye as it did in 1825, when I left you with my heart overflowing with gratitude for your singular and judicious tenderness. Can I ever forget that to your treatment in that crisis of youth I owe the true life,—the love of Truth and Honour?”

LIFE IN CAMBRIDGE.

BY JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

“Extraordinary, generous seeking.”

GOETHE.

“Through, brothers, through,—this be
Our watchword in danger or sorrow,
Common clay to its mother dust,
All nobleness heavenward !”

THEODORE KOERNER.

“Thou friend whose presence on my youthful heart
Fell, like bright Spring upon some herbless plain ;
How beautiful and calm and free thou wert
In thy young wisdom, when the mortal chain
Of custom thou didst burst and rend in twain,
And walk as free as light the clouds among !”

SHELLEY.

“THERE are not a few instances of that conflict, known also to the fathers, of the spirit with the flesh, the inner with the outer man, of the freedom of the will with the necessity of nature, the pleasure of the individual with the conventions of society, of the emergency of the case with the despotism of the rule. It is this, which, while it makes the interest of life, makes the difficulty of living. It is a struggle, indeed, between unequal powers, —between the man, who is a conscious moral person, and nature, or events, or bodies of men, which either want personality or unity, and hence the man, after fearful and desolating war, sometimes rises on the ruins of all the necessities of nature, and all the prescriptions of society. But what these want in personality they possess in number, in recurrency, in invulnerability. The spirit of man, an agent indeed of curious power and boundless resource, but trembling with sensibilities, tender and irritable, goes out against the inexorable conditions of destiny, the lifeless forces of nature, or the ferocious cruelty of the multitude, and long before the hands are weary or the invention exhausted, the heart may be broken in the warfare.”

N. A. REVIEW, Jan. 1817, article “*Dichtung und Wahrheit*.”

II.

C A M B R I D G E.

THE difficulty which we all feel in describing our past intercourse and friendship with Margaret Fuller, is, that the intercourse was so intimate, and the friendship so personal, that it is like making a confession to the public of our most interior selves. For this noble person, by her keen insight and her generous interest, entered into the depth of every soul with which she stood in any real relation. To print one of her letters is like giving an extract from our own private journal. To relate what she was to us, is to tell how she discerned elements of worth and beauty where others could only have seen what was common-place and poor; it is to say what high hopes, what generous assurance, what a pure ambition, she entertained on our behalf,—a hope and confidence which may well be felt as a rebuke

to our low attainments and poor accomplishments.

Nevertheless, it seems due to this great soul that those of us who have been blessed and benefited by her friendship should be willing to say what she has done for us,—undeterred by the thought that to reveal her is to expose ourselves.

My acquaintance with Sarah Margaret Fuller began in 1829. We both lived in Cambridge, and from that time until she went to Groton to reside, in 1833, I saw her, or heard from her, almost every day. There was a family connexion, and we called each other cousin.* During this period, her intellect was intensely active. With what eagerness did she seek for knowledge! What fire, what exuberance, what reach, grasp, overflow of thought, shone in her conversation! She needed a friend to whom to speak of her studies, to whom to express the ideas which were dawning and

* I had once before seen Margaret, when we were both children about five years of age. She made an impression on my mind which was never effaced, and I distinctly recollect the joyful child, with light flowing locks and bright face, who led me by the hand down the back-steps of her house into the garden. This was when her father lived in Cambridgeport, in a house on Cherry Street, in front of which still stand some handsome trees, planted by him in the year of Margaret's birth.

taking shape in her mind. She accepted me for this friend, and to me it was a gift of the gods, an influence like no other.

For the first few months of our acquaintance, our intercourse was simply that of two young persons seeking entertainment in each other's society. Perhaps a note written at this time will illustrate the easy and graceful movement of her mind in this superficial kind of intercourse.

"March 16th, 1830. Half-past-six, morning.— I have encountered that most common-place of glories, sunrise, (to say nought of being praised and wondered at by every member of the family in succession,) that I might have leisure to answer your note even as you requested. I thank you a thousand times for 'The Rivals.'* Alas! I must leave my heart in the book, and spend the livelong morning in reading to a sick lady from some amusing story-book. I tell you of this act of (in my professedly unamiable self) most unwonted charity, for three several reasons. Firstly and foremostly, because I think that you, being a socialist by vocation, a sentimentalist by nature,

* "The Rivals" was a novel I had lent her,—if I remember right, by the author of the "Collegians;" a writer who in those days interested us not a little.

and a Channingite from force of circumstances and fashion, will peculiarly admire this little self-sacrifice exploit. Secondly, because 'tis neither conformable to the spirit of the nineteenth century, nor the march of mind, that those churlish reserves should be kept up between *the right and left hands*, which belonged to ages of barbarism and prejudice, and could only have been inculcated for their use. Thirdly, and lastly, the true lady-like reason,—because I would fain have my correspondent enter into and sympathise with my feelings of the moment.

“As to the relationship; 'tis, I find, on inquiry, by no means to be compared with that between myself and —; of course, the intimacy cannot be so great. But no matter; it will enable me to answer your notes, and you will interest my imagination much more than if I knew you better. But I am exceeding legitimate note-writing limits. With a hope that this epistle may be legible to your undiscerning eyes, I conclude,

“Your cousin only thirty-seven degrees removed,

“M.”

The next note which I shall give was written not many days after, and is in quite a different

vein. It is memorable to me as laying the foundation of a friendship which brought light to my mind, which enlarged my heart, and gave elevation and energy to my aims and purposes. For nearly twenty years, Margaret remained true to the pledges of this note. In a few years we were separated, but our friendship remained firm. Living in different parts of the country, occupied with different thoughts and duties, making other friends,—sometimes not seeing nor hearing from each other for months,—we never met without my feeling that she was ready to be interested in all my thoughts, to love those whom I loved, to watch my progress, to rebuke my faults and follies, to encourage within me every generous and pure aspiration, to demand of me, always, the best that I could be or do, and to be satisfied with no mediocrity, no conformity to any low standard.

And what she thus was to me, she was to many others. Inexhaustible in power of insight, and with a good-will “broad as ether,” she could enter into the needs, and sympathise with the various excellencies, of the greatest variety of characters. One thing only she demanded of all her friends,—that they should have some “extra-

ordinary generous seeking,"* that they should not be satisfied with the common routine of life,—that they should aspire to something higher, better, holier, than they had now attained. Where this element of aspiration existed, she demanded no originality of intellect, no greatness of soul. If these were found, well; but she could love, tenderly and truly, where they were not. But for a worldly character, however gifted, she felt and expressed something very like contempt. At this period, she had no patience with self-satisfied mediocrity. She afterwards learned patience and unlearned contempt; but at the time of which I write, she seemed, and was to the multitude, a haughty and supercilious person,—while to those whom she loved, she was all the more gentle, tender and true.

Margaret possessed, in a greater degree than any person I ever knew, the power of so magnetizing others, when she wished, by the power of

* These words of Goethe, which I have placed among the mottoes at the beginning of this chapter, were written by Margaret on the first page of a richly gilt and bound blank book, which she gave to me, in 1832, for a private journal. The words of Körner are also translated by herself, and were given to me about the same time.

her mind, that they would lay open to her all the secrets of their nature. She had an infinite curiosity to know individuals,—not the vulgar curiosity which seeks to find out the circumstances of their outward lives, but that which longs to understand the inward springs of thought and action in their souls. This desire and power both rested on a profound conviction of her mind in the individuality of every human being. A human being, according to her faith, was not the result of the presence and stamp of outward circumstances, but an original *monad*, with a certain special faculty, capable of a certain fixed development, and having a profound personal unity, which the ages of eternity might develop, but could not exhaust. I know not if she would have stated her faith in these terms, but some such conviction appeared in her constant endeavour to see and understand the germinal principle, the special characteristic, of every person whom she deemed worthy of knowing at all. Therefore, while some persons study human nature in its universal laws, and become great philosophers, moralists and teachers of the race,—while others study mankind in action, and, seeing the motives

and feelings by which masses are swayed, become eminent politicians, sagacious leaders, and eminent in all political affairs,—a few, like Margaret, study character, and acquire the power of exerting profoundest influence on individual souls.

I had expressed to her my desire to know something of the history of her mind,—to understand her aims, her hopes, her views of life. In a note written in reply, she answered me thus:—

“I cannot bring myself to write you what you wished. You would be disappointed, at any rate, after all the solemn note of preparation; the consciousness of this would chill me now. Besides, I cannot be willing to leave with you such absolute *vagaries* in a tangible, examinable shape. I think of your after-smiles, of your colder moods. But I will tell you, when a fitting opportunity presents, all that can interest you, and perhaps more. And excuse my caution. I do not profess, I may not dare, to be generous in these matters.”

To this I replied to the effect that, “in my coldest mood I could not criticise words written in a confiding spirit;” and that, at all events, she

must not expect of me a confidence which she dared not return. This was the substance of a note to which Margaret thus replied:—

“I thank you for your note. Ten minutes before I received it, I scarcely thought that anything again would make my stifled heart throb so warm a pulse of pleasure. Excuse my cold doubts, my selfish arrogance,—you will, when I tell you that this experiment has before had such uniform results; those who professed to seek my friendship, and whom, indeed, I have often truly loved, have always learned to content themselves with that inequality in the connexion which I have never striven to veil. Indeed, I have thought myself more valued and better beloved, because the sympathy, the interest, were all on my side. True! such regard could never flatter my pride, nor gratify my affections, since it was paid not to myself, but to the need they had of me; still, it was dear and pleasing, as it has given me an opportunity of knowing and serving many lovely characters; and I cannot see that there is anything else for me to do on earth. And I should rejoice to cultivate generosity, since (see that

since) affections gentler and more sympathetic are denied me.

“I would have been a true friend to you; ever ready to solace your pains and partake your joy as far as possible. Yet I cannot but rejoice that I have met a person who could discriminate and reject a proffer of this sort. Two years ago I should have ventured to proffer you friendship, indeed, on seeing such an instance of pride in you; but I have gone through a sad process of feeling since, and those emotions, so necessarily repressed, have lost their simplicity, their ardent beauty. *Then*, there was nothing I might not have disclosed to a person capable of comprehending, had I ever seen such an one! Now there are many voices of the soul which I imperiously silence. This results not from any particular circumstance or event, but from a gradual ascertaining of realities.

“I cannot promise you any limitless confidence, but I *can* promise that no timid caution, no haughty dread shall prevent my telling you the truth of my thoughts on any subject we may have in common. Will this satisfy you? Oh let it! suffer me to know you.”

In a postscript she adds, "No other cousin or friend of any style is to see this note." So for twenty years it has lain unseen, but for twenty years did we remain true to the pledges of that period. And now that noble heart sleeps beneath the tossing Atlantic, and I feel no reluctance in showing to the world this expression of pure youthful ardour. It may, perhaps, lead some wise worldlings, who doubt the possibility of such a relation, to reconsider the grounds of their scepticism; or, if not that, it may encourage some youthful souls, as earnest and eager as ours, to trust themselves to their hearts' impulse, and enjoy some such blessing as came to us.

Let me give extracts from other notes and letters, written by Margaret, about the same period.

"*Saturday evening, May 1st, 1830.*—The holy moon and merry-toned wind of this night woo to a vigil at the open window; a half-satisfied interest urges me to live, love and perish! in the noble, wronged heart of Basil;* my Journal, which lies before me, tempts to follow out and

* The hero of a novel she was reading.

interpret the as yet only half-understood musings of the past week. Letter-writing, compared with any of these things, takes the ungracious semblance of a duty. I have, nathless, after a two hours' reverie, to which this resolve and its preliminaries have formed excellent warp, determined to sacrifice this hallowed time to you.

"It did not in the least surprise me that you found it impossible at the time to avail yourself of the confidential privileges I had invested you with. On the contrary, I only wonder that we should ever, after such gage given and received, (not by a look or tone, but by letter,) hold any frank communication. Preparations are good in life, prologues ruinous. I felt this even before I sent my note, but could not persuade myself to consign an impulse so embodied, to oblivion, from any consideration of expediency." * *

"*May 4th*, 1830.—* * I have greatly wished to see among us such a person of genius as the nineteenth century can afford—*i. e.* one who has tasted in the morning of existence the extremes of good and ill, both imaginative and real. I had imagined a person endowed by nature with that acute sense of Beauty, (*i. e.* Harmony or Truth,) and that vast

capacity of desire which give soul to love and ambition. I had wished this person might grow up to manhood alone (but not alone in crowds); I would have placed him in a situation so retired, so obscure, that he would quietly, but without bitter sense of isolation, stand apart from all surrounding him. I would have had him go on steadily, feeding his mind with congenial love, hopefully confident that if he only nourished his existence into perfect life, Fate would, at fitting season, furnish an atmosphere and orbit meet for his breathing and exercise. I wished he might adore, not fever for, the bright phantoms of his mind's creation, and believe them but the shadows of external things to be met with hereafter. After this steady intellectual growth had brought his powers to manhood, so far as the ideal can do it, I wished this being might be launched into the world of realities, his heart glowing with the ardour of an immortal toward perfection, his eyes searching everywhere to behold it; I wished he might collect into one burning point those withering, palsying convictions, which, in the ordinary routine of things, so gradually pervade the soul; that he might suffer, in brief space, agonies of disappoint-

ment commensurate with his unpreparedness and confidence. And I thought, thus thrown back on the representing pictorial resources I supposed him originally to possess, with such material, and the need he must feel of using it, such a man would suddenly dilate into a form of Pride, Power, and Glory,—a centre, round which asking, aimless hearts might rally,—a man fitted to act as interpreter to the one tale of many-languaged eyes.

“What words are these! Perhaps you will feel as if I sought but for the longest and strongest. Yet to my ear they do but faintly describe the imagined powers of such a being.”

Margaret's home at this time was in the mansion-house formerly belonging to Judge Dana,—a large, old-fashioned building, since taken down, standing about a quarter of a mile from the Cambridge Colleges, on the main road to Boston. The house stood back from the road, on rising ground, which overlooked an extensive landscape. It was always a pleasure to Margaret to look at the outlines of the distant hills beyond the river, and to have before her this extent of horizon and sky. In the last year of her residence in Cambridge, her father moved to the old Brattle place,

a still more ancient edifice, with large, old-fashioned garden, and stately rows of linden-trees. Here Margaret enjoyed the garden walks, which took the place of the extensive view.

During these five years her life was not diversified by events, but was marked by an inward history. Study, conversation, society, friendship, and reflection on the aim and law of life, made up her biography. Accordingly, these topics will constitute the substance of this chapter, though sometimes, in order to give completeness to a subject, we may anticipate a little, and insert passages from the letters and journals of her Groton life.

1.—FRIENDSHIP.

“Friendly love perfecteth mankind.”

BACON.

“To have found favour in thy sight
Will still remain
A river of thought, that full of light
Divides the plain.”

MILNES.

“Cui potest vita esse vitalis, (ut ait Ennius,) quæ non in amici
mutatâ benevolentîâ requiescat?”—CICERO.

It was while living at Cambridge that Margaret commenced several of those friendships which lasted through her life, and which were the channels for so large a part of her spiritual activity. In giving some account of her in these relations, there is only the alternative of a prudent reserve which omits whatever is liable to be misunderstood, or a frank utterance which confides in the good sense and right feeling of the reader. By the last course, we run the risk of allowing our friend to be misunderstood; but by the first we make it certain that the most important part of her character shall not be understood at all. I

have, therefore, thought it best to follow, as far as I can, her own ideas on this subject, which I find in two of her letters to myself. The first is dated, Groton, Jan. 8th, 1839. I was at that time editing a theological and literary magazine, in the West, and this letter was occasioned by my asking her to allow me to publish therein certain poems and articles of hers, which she had given me to read.

“ And I wish now, as far as I can, to give my reasons for what you consider absurd squeamishness in me. You may not acquiesce in my view, but I think you will respect it *as* mine, and be willing to act upon it so far as I am concerned.

“ Genius seems to me excusable in taking the public for a confidant. Genius is universal, and can appeal to the common heart of man. But even here I would not have it too direct. I prefer to see the thought or feeling made universal. How different the confidence of Goethe, for instance, from that of Byron !

“ But for us lesser people, who write verses merely as vents for the overflowings of a personal experience, which in every life of any value craves occasionally the accompaniment of the lyre, it

seems to me that all the value of this utterance is destroyed by a hasty or indiscriminate publicity. The moment I lay open my heart, and tell the fresh feeling to any one who chooses to hear, I feel profaned.

“When it has passed into experience, when the flower has gone to seed, I don’t care who knows it, or whither they wander. I am no longer it,—I stand on it. I do not know whether this is peculiar to me, or not, but I am sure the moment I cease to have any reserve or delicacy about a feeling, it is on the wane.

“About putting beautiful verses in your Magazine, I have no feeling except what I should have about furnishing a room. I should not put a dressing-case into a parlour, or a book-case into a dressing-room, because, however good things in their place, they were not in place there. And this, not in consideration of the public, but of my own sense of fitness and harmony.”

The next extract is from a letter written to me in 1842, after a journey which we had taken to the White Mountains, in the company of my sister, and Mr. and Mrs. Farrar. During this

journey, Margaret had conversed with me concerning some passages of her private history and experience, and in this letter she asks me to be prudent in speaking of it, giving her reasons as follows :—

“ *Cambridge, July 31, 1842.*—* * I said I was happy in having no secret. It is my nature, and has been the tendency of my life, to wish that all my thoughts and deeds might lie, as the ‘open secrets’ of Nature, free to all who are able to understand them. I have no reserves, except intellectual reserves; for to speak of things to those who cannot receive them is stupidity rather than frankness. But in this case, I alone am not concerned. Therefore, dear James, give heed to the subject. You have received a key to what was before unknown of your friend; you have made use of it, now let it be buried with the past, over whose passages profound and sad, yet touched with heaven-born beauty, ‘let silence stand sentinel.’ ”

I shall endeavour to keep true to the spirit of these sentences in speaking of Margaret’s friendships. Yet not to speak of them in her biography

would be omitting the most striking feature of her character. It would be worse than the play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted. Henry the Fourth without Sully, Gustavus Adolphus without Oxenstiern, Napoleon without his marshals, Socrates without his scholars, would be more complete than Margaret without her friends. So that, in touching on these private relations we must be everywhere "bold," yet not "too bold." The extracts will be taken indiscriminately from letters written to many friends.

The insight which Margaret displayed in finding her friends, the magnetism by which she drew them toward herself, the catholic range of her intimacies, the influence which she exercised to develop the latent germ of every character, the constancy with which she clung to each when she had once given and received confidence, the delicate justice which kept every intimacy separate, and the process of transfiguration which took place when she met any one on this mountain of Friendship, giving a dazzling lustre to the details of common life, —all these should be at least touched upon and illustrated to give any adequate view of her in these relations.

Such a prejudice against her had been created by her faults of manner, that the persons she might most wish to know often retired from her and avoided her. But she was “sagacious of her quarry,” and never suffered herself to be repelled by this. She saw when any one belonged to her, and never rested till she came into possession of her property. I recollect a lady who thus fled from her for several years, yet, at last, became most nearly attached to her. This “wise sweet” friend, as Margaret characterised her in two words, a flower hidden in the solitude of deep woods, Margaret saw and appreciated from the first.

See how, in the following passage, she describes to one of her friends her perception of character, and her power of attracting it, when only fifteen years old.

“*Jamaica Plains, July, 1848.*—Do you remember my telling you, at Cohasset, of a Mr. —— staying with us, when I was fifteen, and all that passed? Well, I have not seen him since, till, yesterday, he came here. I was pleased to find, that, even at so early an age, I did not overrate those I valued. He was the same as in memory ;

the powerful eye dignifying an otherwise ugly face; the calm wisdom, and refined observation, the imposing *manière d'être*, which anywhere would give him an influence among men, without his taking any trouble, or making any sacrifice, and the great waves of feeling that seemed to rise as an attractive influence, and overspread his being. He said, nothing since his childhood had been so marked as his visit to our house; that it had dwelt in his thoughts unchanged amid all changes. I could have wished he had never returned to change the picture. He looked at me continually, and said, again and again, he should have known me anywhere; but O how changed I must be since that epoch of pride and fullness! He had with him his son, a wild boy of five years old, all brilliant with health and energy, and with the same powerful eye. He said,—You know I am not one to confound acuteness and rapidity of intellect with real genius; but he is for those an extraordinary child. He would astonish you, but I look deep enough into the prodigy to see the work of an extremely nervous temperament, and I shall make him as dull as I can. ‘*Margaret*,’ (pronouncing the name in the same deliberate searching way he used to do,)

‘ I love him so well, I will try to teach him moderation. If I can help it, he shall not feed on bitter ashes, nor try these paths of avarice and ambition.’ It made me feel very strangely to hear him talk so to my old self. What a gulf between ! There is scarce a fibre left of the haughty, passionate ambitious child he remembered and loved. I felt affection for him still ; for his character was formed then, and had not altered, except by ripening and expanding ! But thus, in other worlds, we shall remember our present selves.”

Margaret’s constancy to any genuine relation, once established, was surprising. If her friends’ *aim* changed, so as to take them out of her sphere, she was saddened by it, and did not let them go without a struggle. But wherever they continued “ true to the original standard,” (as she loved to phrase it) her affectionate interest would follow them unimpaired through all the changes of life. The principle of this constancy she thus expresses in a letter to one of her brothers :—

“ Great and even *fatal* errors (so far as this life is concerned) could not destroy my friendship for one in whom I am sure of the kernel of nobleness.”

She never formed a friendship until she had seen and known this germ of good; and afterwards judged conduct by this. To this germ of good, to this highest law of each individual, she held them true. But never did she act like those who so often judge of their friend from some report of his conduct, as if they had never known him, and allow the inference from a single act to alter the opinion formed by an induction from years of intercourse. From all such weakness Margaret stood wholly free.

I have referred to the wide range of Margaret's friendships. Even at this period this variety was very apparent. She was the centre of a group very different from each other, and whose only affinity consisted in their all being polarized by the strong attraction of her mind,—all drawn toward herself. Some of her friends were young, gay, and beautiful; some old, sick, or studious. Some were children of the world, others pale scholars. Some were witty, others slightly dull. But all, in order to be Margaret's friends, must be capable of seeking something,—capable of some aspiration for the better. And how did she glorify life to all! all that was tame and common

vanishing away in the picturesque light thrown over the most familiar things by her rapid fancy, her brilliant wit, her sharp insight, her creative imagination, by the inexhaustible resources of her knowledge, and the copious rhetoric which found words and images always apt and always ready. Even then she displayed almost the same marvellous gift of conversation which afterwards dazzled all who knew her,—with more perhaps of freedom, since she floated on the flood of our warm sympathies. Those who know Margaret only by her published writings know her least; her notes and letters contain more of her mind; but it was only in conversation that she was perfectly free and at home.

Margaret's constancy in friendship caused her to demand it in others, and thus she was sometimes exacting. But the pure Truth of her character caused her to express all such feelings with that freedom and simplicity that they became only as slight clouds on a serene sky, giving it a tenderer beauty, and casting picturesque shades over the landscape below. From her letters to different friends I select a few examples of these feelings.

“ The world turns round and round, and you too must needs be negligent and capricious. You have not answered my note ; you have not given me what I asked. You do not come here. Do not you act so,—it is the drop too much. The world seems not only turning but tottering, when my kind friend plays such a part.”

“ You need not have delayed your answer so long ; why not at once answer the question I asked ? Faith is not natural to me ; for the love I feel to others is not in the idleness of poverty, nor can I persist in believing the best, merely to save myself pain, or keep a leaning place for the weary heart. But I should believe you, because I have seen that your feelings are strong and constant ; they have never disappointed me, when closely scanned.”

“ *July 6, 1832.*—I believe I behaved very badly the other evening. I did not think so yesterday. I had been too surprised and vexed to recover very easily, but to-day my sophistries have all taken wing, and I feel that nothing good could have made me act with such childish petulance and bluntness towards one who spoke from friendly emotions. Be at peace ; I will astonish you by

my repose, mildness, and self-possession. No, that is silly ; but I believe it cannot be right to be on such terms with any one, that, on the least vexation, I indulge my feelings at his or her expense. We will talk less, but we shall be very good friends still, I hope. Shall not we ?”

In the last extract, we have an example of that genuine humility, which, being a love of truth, underlaid her whole character, notwithstanding its seeming pride. She could not have been great as she was, without it.*

“ *December 19th, 1829.*—I shall always be glad to have you come to me when saddened. The melancholic does not misbecome you. The lights of your character are *wintry*. They are generally inspiriting, life-giving, but, if perpetual, would glare too much on the tired sense ; one likes sometimes a cloudy day, with its damp and warmer breath,—its gentle, down-looking shades. Sadness

* According to Dryden’s beautiful statement—

“ For as high turrets, in their airy sweep
Require foundations, in proportion deep,
And lofty cedars as far upward shoot
As to the nether heavens they drive the root ;
So low did her secure foundation lie,
She was not humble, but humility.”

in some is intolerably ungraceful and oppressive ; it affects one like a cold rainy day in June or September, when all pleasure departs with the sun ; everything seems out of place and irrelative to the time ; the clouds are fog, the atmosphere leaden,—but 'tis not so with you."

Of her own truthfulness to her friends, which led her frankly to speak to them of their faults or dangers, her correspondence gives constant examples.

The first is from a letter of later date than properly belongs to this chapter, but is so wholly in her spirit of candour that I insert it here. It is from a letter written in 1843.

"I have been happy in the sight of your pure design, of the sweetness and serenity of your mind. In the inner sanctuary we met. But I shall say a few blunt words, such as were frequent in the days of intimacy, and, if they are needless, you will let them fall to the ground. Youth is past, with its passionate joys and griefs, its restlessness, its vague desires. You have chosen your path, you have rounded out your lot, your duties are before you. *Now* beware the mediocrity that threatens middle age, its limitation of thought and

interest, its dulness of fancy, its too external life and mental thinness. Remember the limitations that threaten every professional man, only to be guarded against by great earnestness and watchfulness. So take care of yourself, and let not the intellect more than the spirit be quenched.

“It is such a relief to me to be able to speak to you upon a subject which I thought would never lie open between us. Now there will be no place which does not lie open to the light. I can always say what I feel. And the way in which you took it, so like yourself, so manly and noble, gives me the assurance that I shall have the happiness of seeing in you that symmetry, that conformity in the details of life with the highest aims, of which I have sometimes despaired. How much higher, dear friend, is ‘the mind, the music breathing from the’ *life*, than anything we can say! Character is higher than intellect; this I have long felt to be true; may we both live as if we knew it.”

* * “I hope and believe we may be yet very much to each other. Imperfect as I am, I feel myself not unworthy to be a true friend. Neither of us is unworthy. In few natures does such love

for the good and beautiful survive the ruin of all youthful hopes, the wreck of all illusions.”

“ I supposed our intimacy would terminate when I left Cambridge. Its continuing to subsist is a matter of surprise to me. And I expected, ere this, you would have found some Hersilia, or such-like, to console you for losing your Natalia. See, my friend, I am three and twenty. I believe in love and friendship, but I cannot but notice that circumstances have appalling power, and that those links which are not riveted by situation, by *interest*, (I mean, not merely worldly interest, but the instinct of self-preservation,) may be lightly broken by a chance touch. I speak not in misanthropy, I believe

“ Die Zeit ist schlecht, doch giebts noch grosse Herzen.

“ Surely I may be pardoned for aiming at the same results with the chivalrous ‘gift of the gods.’ I cannot endure to be one of those shallow beings who can never get beyond the primer of experience,—who are ever saying—

“ Ich habe geglaubt, *nun glaube ich erst recht*,
Und geht es auch wunderbarlich, geht es auch schlecht,
Ich bleibe in gläubigen Orden.

Yet, when you write, write freely, and if I don't like what you say, let me say so. I have ever been frank, as if I expected to be intimate with you good threescore years and ten. I am sure we shall always esteem each other. I have that much faith."

"*Jan. 1832.*—All that relates to —— must be interesting to me, though I never voluntarily think of him now. The apparent caprice of his conduct has shaken my faith, but not destroyed my hope. That hope, if I, who have so mistaken others, may dare to think I know myself, was never selfish. It is painful to lose a friend whose knowledge and converse mingled so intimately with the growth of my mind,—an early friend, to whom I was all truth and frankness, seeking nothing but equal truth and frankness in return. But this evil may be borne; the hard, the lasting evil was to learn to distrust my own heart, and lose all faith in my power of knowing others. In this letter I see again that peculiar pride, that contempt of the forms and shows of goodness, that fixed resolve to be anything but 'like unto the Pharisees,' which were to my eye such happy omens. Yet how strangely distorted are all his views! The daily influence of his intercourse

with me was like the breath he drew; it has become a part of him. Can he escape from himself? Would he be unlike all other mortals? His feelings are as false as those of Alcibiades. He influenced me, and helped to form me to what I am. Others shall succeed him. Shall I be ashamed to owe anything to friendship? But why do I talk?—a child might confute him by defining the term *human being*. He will gradually work his way into light; if too late for our friendship, not, I trust, too late for his own peace and honourable well-being. I never insisted on being the instrument of good to him. I practised no little arts, no! not to effect the good of the friend I loved. I have prayed to heaven, (surely we are sincere when doing that,) to guide him in the best path for him, however far from me that path might lead. The lesson I have learned may make me a more useful friend, a more efficient aid to others than I could be to him; yet I hope I shall not be denied the consolation of knowing surely, one day, that all which appeared evil in the companion of happy years was but error.”

* * * * *

“I think, since you have seen so much of my character, that you must be sensible that any

reserves with those whom I call my friends, do not arise from duplicity, but an instinctive feeling that I could not be understood. I can truly say that I wish no one to overrate me ; undeserved regard could give me no pleasure ; nor will I consent to practise charlatanism, either in friendship or anything else.”

* * * * *

“You ought not to think I show a want of generous confidence, if I sometimes try the ground on which I tread, to see if perchance it may return the echoes of hollowness.”

* * * * *

“Do not cease to respect me as formerly. It seems to me that I have reached the ‘parting of the ways’ in my life, and all the knowledge which I have toiled to gain only serves to show me the disadvantages of each. None of those who think themselves my friends can aid me ; each, careless, takes the path to which present convenience impels ; and all would smile or stare, could they know the aching and measureless wishes, the sad apprehensiveness, which make me pause and strain my almost hopeless gaze to the distance. What wonder if my present conduct

should be mottled by selfishness and incertitude? Perhaps you, who *can* make your views certain, cannot comprehend me; though you showed me last night a penetration which did not flow from sympathy. But this I may say—though the glad light of hope and ambitious confidence, which has vitalized my mind, should be extinguished for ever, I will not in life act a mean, ungenerous, or useless part. Therefore, let not a slight thing lessen your respect for me. If you feel as much pain as I do, when obliged to diminish my respect for any person, you will be glad of this assurance. I hope you will not think this note in the style of a French novel.”

POWER OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

“Do you remember a conversation we had in the garden, one starlight evening, last summer, about the incalculable power which outward circumstances have over the character? You would not sympathise with the regrets I expressed, that mine had not been formed amid scenes and persons of nobleness and beauty, eager passions and dignified events, instead of those secret trials and petty conflicts which make my transition state

so hateful to my memory and my tastes. You then professed the faith which I resigned with such anguish,—the faith which a Schiller could never attain,—a faith in the power of the human will. Yet now, in every letter, you talk to me of the power of circumstances. You tell me how changed you are. Every one of your letters is different from the one preceding, and all so altered from your former self. For are you not leaving all our old ground, and do you not apologise to me for all your letters? Why do you apologise? I think I know you very, very well; considering that we are both human, and have the gift of concealing our thoughts with words. Nay, further—I do not believe you will be able to become anything which I cannot understand. I know I can sympathise with all who feel and think, from a Dryfesdale up to a Max Piccolomini. You say, you have become a machine. If so, I shall expect to find you a grand, high-pressure, wave-compelling one—requiring plenty of fuel. You must be a steam-engine, and move some majestic fabric at the rate of thirty miles an hour along the broad waters of the nineteenth century. None of your pendulum machines for me! I

should, to be sure, turn away my head if I should hear you tick, and mark the quarters of hours ; but the buzz and whiz of a good large life-endangerer would be music to mine ears. Oh, no ! sure there is no danger of your requiring to be set down quite on a level, kept in a still place, and wound up every eight days. Oh no, no ! you are not one of that numerous company, who

——“ ‘ Live and die,
Eat, drink, wake, sleep between,
Walk, talk like clock-work too,
So pass in order due,
Over the scene,
To where the past—*is* past,
The future—nothing yet,’ &c. &c.

But we must all be machines : you shall be a steam-engine ;—shall be a mill, with extensive water-privileges,—and I will be a spinning jenny. No ! upon second thoughts, I will not be a machine. I will be an instrument, not to be confided to vulgar hands,—for instance, a chisel to polish marble, or a whetstone to sharpen steel !”

In an unfinished tale, Margaret has given the following studies of character. She is describing two of the friends of the hero of her story. Unquestionably the traits here given were taken from

life, though it might not be easy to recognise the portrait of any individual in either sketch. Yet we insert it here to show her own idea of this relation, and her fine feeling of the action and reaction of these subtle intimacies.

“Now, however, I found companions, in thought, at least. One, who had great effect on my mind, I may call Lytton. He was as premature as myself; at thirteen a man in the range of his thoughts, analysing motives, and explaining principles, when he ought to have been playing cricket, or hunting in the woods. The young Arab or Indian may dispense with mere play, and enter betimes into the histories and practices of manhood, for all these are, in their modes of life, closely connected with simple nature, and educate the body no less than the mind; but the same good cannot be said of lounging lazily under a tree, while mentally accompanying Gil Blas through his course of intrigue and adventure, and visiting with him the impure atmosphere of courtiers, picaroons, and actresses. This was Lytton’s favourite reading; his mind, by nature subtle rather than daring, would in any case have found its food in the now hidden workings of character and passion, the

by-play of life, the unexpected and seemingly incongruous relations to be found there. He loved the natural history of man, not religiously, but for entertainment. What he sought, he found, but paid the heaviest price. All his later days were poisoned by his subtlety, which made it impossible for him to look at any action with a single and satisfied eye. He tore the buds open to see if there were no worm sheathed in the blushful heart, and was so afraid of overlooking some mean possibility, that he lost sight of virtue. Grubbing like a mole beneath the surface of earth, rather than reading its living language above, he had not faith enough to believe in the flower, neither faith enough to mine for the gem, and remains at penance in the limbo of halfnesses, I trust not for ever. Then all his characteristics wore brilliant hues. He was very witty, and I owe to him the great obligation of being the first and only person who has excited me to frequent and boundless gaiety. The sparks of his wit were frequent, slight surprises; his was a slender dart, and rebounded easily to the hand. I like the scintillating, arrowy wit far better than broad, genial humour. The light metallic touch pleases me.

When wit appears as fun and jollity, she wears a little of the Silenus air ;—the Mercurial is what I like.

“In later days,—for my intimacy with him lasted many years,—he became the feeder of my intellect. He delighted to ransack the history of a nation, of an art or a science, and bring to me all the particulars. Telling them fixed them in his own memory, which was the most tenacious and ready I have ever known ; he enjoyed my clear perception as to their relative value, and I classified them in my own way. As he was omnivorous, and of great mental activity, while my mind was intense, though rapid in its movements, and could only give itself to a few things of its own accord, I traversed on the wings of his effort large demesnes that would otherwise have remained quite unknown to me. They were not, indeed, seen to the same profit as my own province, whose tillage I knew, and whose fruits were the answer to my desire ; but the fact of seeing them at all gave a largeness to my view, and a candour to my judgment. I could not be ignorant how much there was I did not know, nor leave out of sight the many sides to every question, while, by the law of affinity, I chose my own.

“Lytton was not loved by any one. He was not positively hated, or disliked; for there was nothing which the general mind could take firm hold of enough for such feelings. Cold, intangible, he was to play across the life of others. A momentary resentment was sometimes felt at a presence which would not mingle with theirs; his scrutiny, though not hostile, was recognised as unfeeling and impertinent, and his mirth unsettled all objects from their foundations. But he was soon forgiven and forgotten. Hearts went not forth to war against or to seek one who was a mere experimentalist and observer in existence. For myself, I did not love, perhaps, but was attached to him, and the attachment grew steadily, for it was founded, not on what I wanted of him, but on his truth to himself. His existence was a real one; he was not without a pathetic feeling of his wants, but was never tempted to supply them by imitating the properties of any other character. He accepted the law of his being, and never violated it. This is next best to the nobleness which transcends it. I did not disapprove, even when I disliked, his acts.

“Amadin, my other companion, was as slow and

deep of feeling, as Lytton was brilliant, versatile, and cold. His temperament was generally grave, even to apparent dulness ; his eye gave little light, but a slow fire burned in its depths. His was a character not to be revealed to himself, or others, except by the important occasions of life. Though every day, no doubt, deepened and enriched him, it brought little that he could show or recal. But when his soul, capable of religion, capable of love, was moved, all his senses were united in the word or action that followed, and the impression made on you was entire. I have scarcely known any capable of such true manliness as he. His poetry, written, or unwritten, was the experience of life. It lies in few lines, as yet, but not one of them will ever need to be effaced.

“Early that serious eye inspired in me a trust that has never been deceived. There was no magnetism in him, no lights and shades that could stir the imagination ; no bright ideal suggested by him stood between the friend and his self. As the years matured that self, I loved him more, and knew him as he knew himself, always in the present moment ; he could never occupy my mind in absence.”

Another of her early friends, Rev. F. H. Hedge, has sketched his acquaintance with her in the following paper, communicated by him for these memoirs. Somewhat older than Margaret, and having enjoyed an education at a German university, his conversation was full of interest and excitement to her. He opened to her a whole world of thoughts and speculations which gave movement to her mind in a congenial direction.

“My acquaintance with Margaret commenced in the year 1823, at Cambridge, my native place and hers. I was then a member of Harvard College, in which my father held one of the offices of instruction, and I used frequently to meet her in the social circles of which the families connected with the college formed the nucleus. Her father, at this time, represented the county of Middlesex in the Congress of the United States.

“Margaret was then about thirteen,—a child in years, but so precocious in her mental and physical developments, that she passed for eighteen or twenty. Agreeably to this estimate, she had her place in society, as a lady full-grown.

“ When I recal her personal appearance, as it was then and for ten or twelve years subsequent to this, I have the idea of a blooming girl of a florid complexion and vigorous health, with a tendency to robustness, of which she was painfully conscious, and which, with little regard to hygienic principles, she endeavoured to suppress or conceal, thereby preparing for herself much future suffering. With no pretensions to beauty then, or at any time, her face was one that attracted, that awakened a lively interest, that made one desirous of a nearer acquaintance. It was a face that fascinated, without satisfying. Never seen in repose, never allowing a steady perusal of its features, it baffled every attempt to judge the character by physiognomical induction. You saw the evidence of a mighty force, but what direction that force would assume,—whether it would determine itself to social triumphs, or to triumphs of art,—it was impossible to divine. Her moral tendencies, her sentiments, her true and prevailing character, did not appear in the lines of her face. She seemed equal to anything, but might not choose to put forth her strength. You felt that a great possibility lay behind that brow, but you felt, also, that

the talent that was in her might miscarry through indifference or caprice.

“I said she had no pretensions to beauty. Yet she was not plain. She escaped the reproach of positive plainness, by her blond and abundant hair, by her excellent teeth, by her sparkling, dancing, busy eyes, which, though usually half closed from near-sightedness, shot piercing glances at those with whom she conversed, and, most of all, by the very peculiar and graceful carriage of her head and neck, which all who knew her will remember as the most characteristic trait in her personal appearance.

“In conversation she had already, at that early age, begun to distinguish herself, and made much the same impression in society that she did in after years, with the exception, that, as she advanced in life, she learned to control that tendency to sarcasm,—that disposition to ‘quiz,’—which was then somewhat excessive. It frightened shy young people from her presence, and made her, for a while, notoriously unpopular with the ladies of her circle.

“This propensity seems to have been aggravated by unpleasant encounters in her school-girl ex-

perience. She was a pupil of Dr. Park, of Boston, whose seminary for young ladies was then at the height of a well-earned reputation, and whose faithful and successful endeavours in this department have done much to raise the standard of female education among us. Here the inexperienced country girl was exposed to petty persecutions from the dashing misses of the city, who pleased themselves with giggling criticisms not inaudible, nor meant to be inaudible to their subject, on whatsoever in dress and manner fell short of the city mark. Then it was first revealed to her young heart, and laid up for future reflection, how large a place in woman's world is given to fashion and frivolity. Her mind reacted on these attacks with indiscriminate sarcasms. She made herself formidable by her wit, and, of course, unpopular. A root of bitterness sprung up in her which years of moral culture were needed to eradicate.

“Partly to evade the temporary unpopularity into which she had fallen, and partly to pursue her studies secure from those social avocations which were found unavoidable in the vicinity of Cambridge and Boston, in 1824 or 5 she was sent

to Groton, where she remained two years in quiet seclusion.

“ On her return to Cambridge, in 1826, I renewed my acquaintance, and an intimacy was then formed, which continued until her death. The next seven years, which were spent in Cambridge, were years of steady growth, with little variety of incident, and little that was noteworthy of outward experience, but with great intensity of the inner life. It was with her, as with most young women, and with most young men, too, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, a period of preponderating sentimentality, a period of romance and of dreams, of yearning and of passion. She pursued at this time, I think, no systematic study, but she read with the heart, and was learning more from social experience than from books.

“ I remember noting at this time a trait which continued to be a prominent one through life,— I mean a passionate love for the beautiful, which comprehended all the kingdoms of nature and art. I have never known one who seemed to derive such satisfaction from the contemplation of lovely forms.

“ Her intercourse with girls of her own age and standing was frank and excellent. Personal attractions, and the homage which they received, awakened in her no jealousy. She envied not their success, though vividly aware of the worth of beauty, and inclined to exaggerate her own deficiencies in that kind. On the contrary, she loved to draw these fair girls to herself, and to make them her guests, and was never so happy as when surrounded, in company, with such a bevy. This attraction was mutual, as, according to Goethe, every attraction is. Where she felt an interest, she awakened an interest. Without flattery or art, by the truth and nobleness of her nature, she won the confidence, and made herself the friend and intimate, of a large number of young ladies—the belles of their day—with most of whom she remained in correspondence during the greater part of her life.

“ In our evening reunions she was always conspicuous by the brilliancy of her wit, which needed but little provocation to break forth in exuberant sallies, that drew around her a knot of listeners, and made her the central attraction of the hour. Rarely did she enter a company in which she was not a prominent object.

“ I have spoken of her conversational talent. It continued to develop itself in these years, and was certainly her most decided gift. One could form no adequate idea of her ability without hearing her converse. She did many things well, but nothing so well as she talked. It is the opinion of all her friends, that her writings do her very imperfect justice. For some reason or other, she could never deliver herself in print as she did with her lips. She required the stimulus of attentive ears, and answering eyes, to bring out all her power. She must have her auditory about her.

“ Her conversation, as it was then, I have seldom heard equalled. It was not so much attractive as commanding. Though remarkably fluent and select, it was neither fluency, nor choice diction, nor wit, nor sentiment, that gave it its peculiar power, but accuracy of statement, keen discrimination, and a certain weight of judgment which contrasted strongly and charmingly with the youth and sex of the speaker. I do not remember that the vulgar charge of talking ‘like a book’ was ever fastened upon her, although, by her precision, she might seem to have incurred it. The fact was, her speech, though finished and true as the most deliberate rhetoric of the pen, had always

an air of spontaneity which made it seem the grace of the moment,—the result of some organic provision that made finished sentences as natural to her as blundering and hesitation are to most of us. With a little more imagination, she would have made an excellent improvisatrice.

“ Here let me say a word respecting the character of Margaret’s mind. It was what in woman is generally called a masculine mind; that is, its action was determined by ideas rather than by sentiments. And yet, with this masculine trait, she combined a woman’s appreciation of the beautiful in sentiment and the beautiful in action. Her intellect was rather solid than graceful, yet no one was more alive to grace. She was no artist—she would never have written an epic, or romance, or drama—yet no one knew better the qualities which go to the making of these; and though catholic as to kind, no one was more rigorously exacting as to quality. Nothing short of the best in each kind would content her.

“ She wanted imagination, and she wanted productiveness. She wrote with difficulty. Without external pressure, perhaps, she would never have written at all. She was dogmatic, and not

creative. Her strength was in characterisation and in criticism. Her critique on Goethe, in the second volume of the 'Dial,' is, in my estimation, one of the best things she has written. And, as far as it goes, it is one of the best criticisms extant of Goethe.

"What I especially admired in her was her intellectual sincerity. Her judgments took no bribe from her sex or her sphere, nor from custom nor tradition, nor caprice. She valued truth supremely, both for herself and others. The question with her was not what should be believed, or what ought to be true, but what *is* true. Her yes and no were never conventional; and she often amazed people by a cool and unexpected dissent from the common-places of popular acceptance."

Margaret, we have said, saw in each of her friends the secret interior capability, which might become hereafter developed into some special beauty or power. By means of this penetrating, this prophetic insight, she gave each to himself, acted on each to draw out his best nature, gave him an ideal out of which he could draw strength

and liberty hour by hour. Thus her influence was ever ennobling, and each felt that in her society he was truer, wiser, better, and yet more free and happy than elsewhere. The "dry light" which Lord Bacon loved, she never knew; her light was life, was love, was warm with sympathy and a boundless energy of affection and hope. Though her love flattered and charmed her friends, it did not spoil them, for they knew her perfect truth. They knew that she loved them, not for what she imagined, but for what she saw, though she saw it only in the germ. But as the Greeks beheld a Persephone and Athene in the passing stranger, and ennobled humanity into ideal beauty, Margaret saw all her friends thus idealized. She was a balloon of sufficient power to take us all up with her into the serene depth of heaven, where she loved to float, far above the low details of earthly life. Earth lay beneath us as a lovely picture; its sounds came up mellowed into music.

Margaret was, to persons younger than herself, a Makaria and Natalia. She was wisdom and intellectual beauty, filling life with a charm and glory "known to neither sea nor land." To those

of her own age she was sibyl and seer — a prophetess, revealing the future, pointing the path, opening their eyes to the great aims only worthy of pursuit in life. To those older than herself she was like the Euphorion in Goethe's drama, child of Faust and Helen,—a wonderful union of exuberance and judgment, born of romantic fulness and classic limitation. They saw with surprise her clear good-sense balancing her flow of sentiment and ardent courage. They saw her comprehension of both sides of every question. and gave her their confidence, as to one of equal age, because of so ripe a judgment.

But it was curious to see with what care and conscience she kept her friendships distinct. Her fine practical understanding, teaching her always the value of limits, enabled her to hold apart all her intimacies, nor did one ever encroach on the province of the other. Like a moral Paganini, she played always on a single string, drawing from each its peculiar music, — bringing wild beauty from the slender wire, no less than from the deep-sounding harp-string. Some of her friends had little to give her when compared with others; but I never noticed that she sacri-

ficed in any respect the smaller faculty to the greater. She fully realized that the Divine Being makes each part of this creation divine, and that He dwells in the blade of grass as really if not as fully, as in the majestic oak, which has braved the storm for a hundred years. She felt in full the thought of a poem which she once copied for me from Barry Cornwall, which begins thus :—

“ She was not fair, nor full of grace,
Nor crown'd with thought, nor aught beside.
No wealth had she of mind or face,
To win our love, or gain our pride,—
No lover's thought her heart could touch,—
No poet's dream was round her thrown;
And yet we miss her—ah, so much !
Now—she has flown.”

I will close this section of Cambridge Friendship with the following letter, written in 1839, but referring to this early period :—

“ Your letter was of cordial sweetness to me, as is ever the thought of our friendship,—that sober-suited friendship, of which the web was so deliberately and well woven, and which wears so well.

* * * * *

“ I want words to express the singularity of all my past relations ; yet let me try.

“From a very early age I have felt that I was not born to the common womanly lot. I knew I should never find a being who could keep the key of my character ; that there would be none on whom I could always lean, from whom I could always learn ; that I should be a pilgrim and sojourner on earth, and that the birds and foxes would be surer of a place to lay the head than I. You understand me, of course ; such beings can only find their homes in hearts. All material luxuries, all the arrangements of society, are mere conveniences to them.

“This thought, all whose bearings I did not, indeed, understand, affected me sometimes with sadness, sometimes with pride. I mourned that I never should have a thorough experience of life, never know the full riches of my being ; I was proud that I was to test myself in the sternest way, that I was always to return to myself, to be my own priest, pupil, parent, child, husband, and wife. All this I did not understand as I do now ; but this destiny of the thinker, and (shall I dare to say it ?) of the poetic priestess, sibylline, dwelling in the cave, or amid the Lybian sands, lay yet enfolded in my mind. Accordingly, I did not

look on any of the persons, brought into relation with me, with common womanly eyes.

“ Yet, as my character is, after all, still more feminine than masculine, it would sometimes happen that I put more emotion into a state than I myself knew. I really was capable of attachment, though it never seemed so till the hour of separation. And if a connexion was torn up by the roots, the soil of my existence showed an unsightly wound, which long refused to clothe itself in verdure.

“ With regard to yourself, I was to you all that I wished to be. I knew that I reigned in your thoughts in my own way. And I also lived with you more truly and freely than with any other person. We were truly friends, but it was not friends as men are friends to one another, or as brother and sister. There was, also, that pleasure, which may, perhaps, be termed conjugal, of finding oneself in an alien nature. Is there any tinge of love in this? Possibly! At least, in comparing it with my relation to ——, I find *that* was strictly fraternal. I valued him for himself. I did not care for an influence over him, and was perfectly willing to have one or fifty rivals in his heart. * *

* * “ I think I may say, I never loved. I but see my possible life reflected on the clouds. As in a glass darkly, I have seen what I might feel as child, wife, mother, but I have never really approached the close relations of life. A sister I have truly been to many,—a brother to more,—a fostering nurse to, oh how many ! The bridal hour of many a spirit, when first it was wed, I have shared, but said adieu before the wine was poured out at the banquet. And there is one I always love in my poetic hour, as the lily looks up to the star from amid the waters ; and another whom I visit as the bee visits the flower, when I crave sympathy. Yet those who live would scarcely consider that I am among the living,—and I am isolated, as you say.

“ My dear ——, all is well ; all has helped me to decipher the great poem of the universe. I can hardly describe to you the happiness which floods my solitary hours. My actual life is yet much clogged and impeded, but I have at last got me an oratory, where I can retire and pray. With your letter, vanished a last regret. You did not act or think unworthily. It is enough. As to the cessation of our confidential intercourse, cir-

cumstances must have accomplished that long ago ; my only grief was that you should do it with your own free will, and for reasons that I thought unworthy. I long to honour you, to be honoured by you. Now we will have free and noble thoughts of one another, and all that is best of our friendship shall remain."

II.—CONVERSATION—SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.

“Be thou what thou singly art, and personate only thyself. Swim smoothly in the stream of thy nature, and live but one man.”—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

“Ah, how mournful look in letters,
Black on white, the words to me,
Which from lips of thine cast fetters
Round the heart, or set it free.”

GOETHE, *translated by J. S. Dwight.*

“Zu erfinden, zu beschliessen,
Bleibe, Künstler, oft allein;
Deines Wirkens zu geniessen
Eile freudig zum Verein,
Hier im Ganzen schau erfahre
Deines eignes Lebenslauf,
Und die Thaten mancher Jahre
Gehn dir in dem Nachbar auf.”

GOETHE, *Artist's Song.*

WHEN I first knew Margaret, she was much in society, but in a circle of her own,—of friends whom she had drawn around her, and whom she entertained and delighted by her exuberant talent. Of those belonging to this circle, let me recal a few characters.

The young girls whom Margaret had attracted were very different from herself, and from each

other. From Boston, Charlestown, Roxbury, Brookline, they came to her, and the little circle of companions would meet now in one house, and now in another, of these pleasant towns. There was A——, a dark-haired, black-eyed beauty, with clear olive complexion, through which the rich blood flowed. She was bright, beauteous, and cold as a gem, with clear perceptions of character within a narrow limit, enjoying society, and always surrounded with admirers, of whose feelings she seemed quite unconscious. While they were just ready to die of unrequited love, she stood untouched as Artemis, scarcely aware of the deadly arrows which had flown from her silver bow. I remember that Margaret said, that Tennyson's little poem of the skipping-rope must have been written for her, where the lover, expressing his admiration of the fairy-like motion and the light grace of the lady, is told—

“Get off, or else my skipping-rope
Will hit you in the eye.”

Then there was B——, the reverse of all this, tender, susceptible, with soft blue eyes, and mouth of trembling sensibility. How sweet were her

songs, in which a single strain of pure feeling ever reminded me of those angel symphonies,—

“In all whose music, the pathetic minor
Our ears will cross——”

and when she sang or spoke, her eyes had often the expression of one looking *in* at her thought not *out* at her companion.

Then there was C——, all animated and radiant with joyful interest in life,—seeing with ready eye the beauty of nature and of thought,—entering with quick sympathy into all human interest, taking readily everything which belonged to her, and dropping with sure instinct whatever suited her not. Unknown to her was struggle, conflict, crisis; she grew up harmonious as the flower, drawing nutriment from earth and air, from “common things which round us lie,” and equally from the highest thoughts and inspirations.

Shall I also speak of D——, whose beauty had a half-voluptuous character, from those ripe red lips, those ringlets overflowing the well-rounded shoulders, and the hazy softness of those large eyes? Or of E——, her companion, beautiful too, but in a calmer, purer style,—with eye from which

looked forth self-possession, truth, and fortitude? Others, well worth notice, I must not notice now.

But among the young men who surrounded Margaret, a like variety prevailed. One was to her interesting, on account of his quick, active intellect, and his contempt for shows and pretences; for his inexhaustible wit, his exquisite taste, his infinitely varied stores of information, and the poetic view which he took of life, painting it with Rembrandt depths of shadow and bursts of light. Another she gladly went to for his compact, thoroughly considered views of God and the world,—for his culture, so much more deep and rich than any other we could find here,—for his conversation, opening in systematic form new fields of thought. Yet men of strong native talent, and rich character, she also liked well to know, however deficient in culture, knowledge, or power of utterance. Each was to her a study, and she never rested till she had found the bottom of every mind,—till she had satisfied herself of its capacity, and currents,—measuring it with her sure line, as

—“All human wits
Are measured, but a few.”

It was by her singular gift of speech that she cast her spells and worked her wonders in this little circle. Full of thoughts and full of words ; capable of poetic improvisation, had there not been a slight overweight of a tendency to the tangible and real ; capable of clear, complete, philosophic statement, but for the strong tendency to life which melted down evermore in its lava-current the solid blocks of thought ; she was yet, by these excesses, better fitted for the arena of conversation. Here she found none adequate for the equal encounter ; when she laid her lance in rest, every champion must go down before it. How fluent her wit, which, for hour after hour, would furnish best entertainment, as she described scenes where she had lately been, or persons she had lately seen ! Yet she readily changed from gay to grave, and loved better the serious talk which opened the depths of life. Describing a conversation in relation to Christianity, with a friend of strong mind, who told her he had found, in this religion, a home for his best and deepest thoughts, she says,—“ Ah ! what a pleasure to meet with such a daring, yet realizing mind as his ! ” But her catholic taste found satisfaction in inter-

course with persons quite different from herself in opinions and tendencies, as the following letter, written in her twentieth year, will indicate :—

* * * * *

“ I was very happy, although greatly restrained by the apprehension of going a little too far with these persons of singular refinement and settled opinions. However, I believe I did pretty well, though I did make one or two little mistakes, when most interested ; but I was not so foolish as to try to retrieve them. One occasion more particularly, when Mr. G——, after going more fully into his poetical opinions than I could have expected, stated his sentiments : first, that Wordsworth had, in truth, guided, or rather completely vivified the poetry of this age ; secondly, that ’twas his influence which had, in reality, given all his better individuality to Byron. He recurred again and again to this opinion, *con amore*, and seemed to wish much for an answer ; but I would not venture, though it was hard for me to forbear, I knew so well what I thought. Mr. G——’s Wordsworthianism, however, is excellent ; his beautiful simplicity of taste, and love of truth, have preserved him from any touch of that vague and imbecile enthusiasm, which has enervated

almost all the exclusive and determined admirers of the great poet whom I have known in these parts. His reverence, his feeling, are thoroughly intelligent. Everything in his mind is well defined ; and his horror of the vague, the false, nay, even (suppose another horror here, for grammar's sake) the startling and paradoxical, have their beauty. I think I could know Mr. G—— long, and see him perpetually, without any touch of satiety ; such variety is made by the very absence of pretension, and the love of truth. I found much amusement in leading him to sketch the scenes and persons which Lockhart portrays in such glowing colours, and which he, too, has seen with the *eye of taste*, but how different !”

* * * * *

Our friend was well aware that her *forte* was in conversation. Here she felt at home, here she felt her power, and the excitement which the presence of living persons brought, gave all her faculties full activity. “After all,” she says in a letter, “this writing is mighty dead. Oh, for my dear old Greeks, who talked everything—not to shine as in the Parisian saloons, but to learn, to teach, to vent the heart, to clear the mind !”

Again, in 1832 :—

“ Conversation is my natural element. I need to be called out, and never think alone, without imagining some companion. Whether this be nature or the force of circumstances, I know not ; it is my habit, and bespeaks a second-rate mind.”

I am disposed to think, much as she excelled in general conversation, that her greatest mental efforts were made in intercourse with individuals. All her friends will unite in the testimony, that whatever they may have known of wit and eloquence in others, they have never seen one who, like her, by the conversation of an hour or two, could not merely entertain and inform, but make an epoch in one's life. We all dated back to this or that conversation with Margaret, in which we took a complete survey of great subjects, came to some clear view of a difficult question, saw our way open before us to a higher plane of life, and were led to some definite resolution or purpose which has had a bearing on all our subsequent career. For Margaret's conversation turned, at such times, to life,—its destiny, its duty, its prospect. With comprehensive glance

she would survey the past, and sum up, in a few brief words, its results ; she would then turn to the future, and, by a natural order, sweep through its chances and alternatives,—passing ever into a more earnest tone, into a more serious view,—and then bring all to bear on the present, till its duties grew plain, and its opportunities attractive. Happy he who can lift conversation, without loss of its cheer, to the highest uses ! Happy he who has such a gift as this, an original faculty thus accomplished by culture, by which he can make our common life rich, significant and fair,—can give to the hour a beauty and brilliancy which shall make it eminent long after, amid dreary years of level routine !

I recal many such conversations. I remember one summer's day, in which we rode together, on horseback, from Cambridge to Newton,—a day all of a piece, in which my eloquent companion helped me to understand my past life, and her own,—a day which left me in that calm repose which comes to us, when we clearly apprehend what we ought to do, and are ready to attempt it. I recal other mornings when, not having seen her for a week or two, I would walk with her for

hours, beneath the lindens or in the garden, while we related to each other what we had read in our German studies. And I always left her astonished at the progress of her mind, at the amount of new thoughts she had garnered, and filled with a new sense of the worth of knowledge, and the value of life.

There were other conversations, in which, impelled by the strong instinct of utterance, she would state, in words of tragical pathos, her own needs and longings,—her demands on life,—the struggles of mind, and of heart,—her conflicts with self, with nature, with the limitations of circumstances, with insoluble problems, with an unattainable desire. She seemed to feel relief from the expression of these thoughts, though she gained no light from her companion. Many such conversations I remember, while she lived in Cambridge, and one such in Groton; but afterwards, when I met her, I found her mind risen above these struggles, and in a self-possessed state which needed no such outlet for its ferment.

It is impossible to give any account of *these* conversations; but I add a few scraps, to indicate, however slightly, something of her ordinary manner.

“Rev. Mr. ——— preached a sermon on TIME. But what business had he to talk about time? We should like well to hear the opinions of a great man, who had made good use of time ; but not of a little man, who had not used it to any purpose. I wished to get up and tell him to speak of something which he knew and felt.”

“The best criticism on those sermons which proclaim so loudly the dignity of human nature was from our friend E. S. She said, coming out from Dr. Channing’s church, that she felt fatigued by the demands the sermon made on her, and would go home and read what Jesus said,—‘*Ye are of more value than many sparrows.*’ That she could bear ; it did not seem exaggerated praise.”

“The Swedenborgians say, ‘that it is *Correspondence*,’ and the phrenologists, ‘that it is *Approbateness*,’ and so think they know all about it. It would not be so, if we could be like the birds, —make one method, and then desert it, and make a new one,—as they build their nests.”

“As regards crime, we cannot understand what we have not *already* felt ;—thus, all crimes have formed part of our minds. We do but recognise one part of ourselves in the worst actions of

others. When you take the subject in this light, do you not incline to consider the capacity for action as something widely differing from the experience of a feeling?"

"How beautiful the life of Benvenuto Cellini! How his occupations perpetually impelled to thought,—to gushings of thought naturally excited!"

"Father lectured me for looking satirical when the man of Words spake, and so attentive to the man of Truth,—that is, of God."

Margaret used often to talk about the books which she and I were reading.

GODWIN. "I think you will be more and more satisfied with Godwin. He has fully lived the double existence of man, and he casts the reflexes on his magic mirror from a height where no object in life's panorama can cause one throb of delirious hope or grasping ambition. At any rate, if you study him, you may know all he has to tell. He is quite free from vanity, and conceals not miserly any of his treasures from the knowledge of posterity."

M'ILLE D'ESPINASSE. "I am swallowing by gasps

that *cauldrony* beverage of selfish passion and morbid taste, the letters of M'lle D'Espinasse. It is good for me. How odious is the abandonment of passion, such as this, unshaded by pride or delicacy, unhallowed by religion,—a selfish craving only; every source of enjoyment stifled to cherish this burning thirst. Yet the picture, so minute in its touches, is true as death. I should not like Delphine now.”

Events in life, apparently trivial, often seemed to her full of mystic significance, and it was her pleasure to turn such to poetry. On one occasion, the sight of a passion-flower, given by one lady to another, and then lost, appeared to her so significant of the character, relation, and destiny of the two, that it drew from her lines, of which two or three seem worth preserving, as indicating her feeling of social relations.

“ Dear friend, my heart grew pensive when I saw
 The flower, for thee so sweetly set apart,
 By one whose passionless though tender heart
 Is worthy to bestow, as angels are,
 By an unheeding hand convey'd away,
 To close, in unsoothed night, the promise of its day.

* * * * *

“ The mystic flower read in thy soul-fill'd eye
 To its life's question the desired reply,
 But came no nearer. On thy gentle breast
 It hoped to find the haven of its rest;

But in cold night, hurried afar from thee,
It closed its once half-smiling destiny.

“ Yet thus, methinks, it utters as it dies,—
‘ By the pure truth of those calm, gentle eyes
Which saw my life should find its aim in thine,
I saw a clime where no strait laws confine.
In that blest land where *twos* ne’er know a *three*,
Save as the accord of their fine sympathy,
O, best-loved, I will wait for thee ! ’ ”

III.—STUDIES.

“ Nur durch das Morgenthor des Schönen
 Drangst du in der Erkenntniß Land ;
 An hohen Glanz sich zu gewöhnen
 Uebt sich am Reize der Verstand.
 Was bei dem Saitenklang der Musen
 Mit süßem Beben dich durchdrang,
 Erzog die Kraft in deinem Busen,
 Die sich dereinst zum Weltgeist schwang.”

SCHILLER.

“ To work, with heart resign'd and spirit strong ;
 Subdue, with patient toil, life's bitter wrong,
 Through Nature's dullest, as her brightest ways,
 We will march onward, singing to thy praise.”

E. S., *in the Dial.*

“ The peculiar nature of the scholar's occupation consists in this,—that science, and especially that side of it from which he conceives of the whole, shall continually burst forth before him in new and fairer forms. Let this fresh spiritual youth never grow old within him ; let no form become fixed and rigid ; let each sunrise bring him new joy and love in his vocation, and larger views of its significance.”—FICHTE.

OF Margaret's studies while at Cambridge, I knew personally only of the German. She already, when I first became acquainted with her, had become familiar with the masterpieces of French, Italian, and Spanish literature. But all this amount of reading had not made her “deep-learned in books and shallow in herself ;” for she

brought to the study of most writers “a spirit and genius equal or superior,”—so far, at least, as the analytic understanding was concerned. Every writer whom she studied, as every person whom she knew, she placed in his own class, knew his relation to other writers, to the world, to life, to nature, to herself. Much as they might delight her, they never swept her away. She breasted the current of their genius, as a stately swan moves up a stream, enjoying the rushing water the more because she resists it. In a passionate love-struggle she wrestled thus with the genius of De Staël, of Rousseau, of Alfieri, of Petrarch.

The first and most striking element in the genius of Margaret was the clear, sharp understanding which keenly distinguished between things different, and kept every thought, opinion, person, character, in its own place, not to be confounded with any other. The god Terminus presided over her intellect. She knew her thoughts as we know each other's faces; and opinions, with most of us so vague, shadowy, and shifting, were in her mind substantial and distinct realities. Some persons see distinctions, others resemblances; but she saw both. No sophist could

pass on her a counterfeit piece of intellectual money; but also she recognised the one pure metallic basis in coins of different epochs, and when mixed with a very ruinous alloy. This gave a comprehensive quality to her mind most imposing and convincing, as it enabled her to show the one Truth, or the one Law, manifesting itself in such various phenomena. Add to this her profound faith in truth, which made her a Realist of that order that thoughts to her were things. The world of her thoughts rose around her mind as a panorama,—the sun in the sky, the flowers distinct in the foreground, the pale mounting sharply, though faintly, cutting the sky with its outline in the distance,—and all in pure light and shade, all in perfect perspective.

Margaret began to study German early in 1832. Both she and I were attracted towards this literature, at the same time, by the wild bugle-call of Thomas Carlyle, in his romantic articles on Richter, Schiller, and Goethe, which appeared in the old *Foreign Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, and afterwards in the *Foreign Quarterly*.

I believe that in about three months from the time that Margaret commenced German, she was

reading with ease the masterpieces of its literature. Within the year, she had read Goethe's Faust, Tasso, Iphigenia, Hermann and Dorothea, Elective Affinities, and Memoirs; Tieck's William Lovel, Prince Zerbino, and other works; Körner, Novalis, and something of Richter; all of Schiller's principal dramas, and his lyric poetry. Almost every evening I saw her, and heard an account of her studies. Her mind opened under this influence, as the apple-blossom at the end of a warm week in May. The thought and the beauty of this rich literature equally filled her mind and fascinated her imagination.

But if she studied books thus earnestly, still more frequently did she turn to the study of men. Authors and their personages were not ideal beings merely, but full of human blood and life. So living men and women were idealized again, and transfigured by her rapid fancy, — every trait intensified, developed, ennobled. Lessing says that "The true portrait painter will paint his subject, flattering him as art ought to flatter, — painting the face not as it actually is, but as creation designed, omitting the imperfections arising from the resistance of the material worked

in." Margaret's portrait-painting intellect treated persons in this way. She saw them as God designed them,—omitting the loss from wear and tear, from false position, from friction of untoward circumstances. If we may be permitted to take a somewhat transcendental distinction, she saw them not as they *actually* were, but as they *really* were. This accounts for her high estimate of her friends,—too high, too flattering, indeed, but justified to her mind by her knowledge of their interior capabilities.

The following extract illustrates her power, even at the age of nineteen, of comprehending the relations of two things lying far apart from each other, and of rising to a point of view which could overlook both :—

"I have had,—while staying a day or two in Boston,—some of Shirley's, Ford's, and Heywood's plays from the Athenæum. There are some noble strains of proud rage, and intellectual, but most poetical, all-absorbing, passion. One of the finest fictions I recollect in those specimens of the Italian novelists,—which you, I think, read when I did,—noble, where it illustrated the

Italian national spirit, is ruined by the English novelist, who has transplanted it to an uncongenial soil; yet he has given it beauties which an Italian eye could not see, by investing the actors with deep, continuing, truly English affections."

* * * *

The following criticism on some of the dialogues of Plato, (dated June 3d, 1833,) in a letter returning the book, illustrates her downright way of asking world-revered authors to accept the test of plain common sense. As a finished or deliberate opinion, it ought not to be read; for it was not intended as such, but as a first impression hastily sketched. But read it as an illustration of the method in which her mind worked, and you will see that she meets the great Plato modestly, but boldly, on human ground, asking him for satisfactory proof of all that he says, and treating him as a human being speaking to human beings.

"*June 3, 1833.*—I part with Plato with regret. I could have wished to 'enchant myself,' as Socrates would say, with him some days longer. Eutyphron is excellent. 'Tis the best specimen I have ever seen of that mode of convincing.

There is one passage in which Socrates, as if it were *aside*—since the remark is quite away from the consciousness of Eutyphron—declares, ‘qu’il aimerait incomparablement mieux des principes fixes et inébranlables à l’habileté de Dédale avec les trésors de Tantale.’ I delight to hear such things from those whose lives have given the right to say them. For ’tis not always true what Lessing says, and I, myself, once thought,—

“F.—Von was für Tugenden spricht er denn ?

MITHEA.—Er spricht von keiner ; denn ihn fehlt keine.”

For the mouth sometimes talketh virtue from the overflowing of the heart ; as well as love, anger, &c.

“ ‘Crito’ I have only read once, but like it. I have not got it in my heart though, so clearly as the others.

“ The ‘Apology’ I deem only remarkable for the noble tone of sentiment, and beautiful calmness. I was much affected by Phædo, but think the argument weak in many respects. The nature of abstract ideas is clearly set forth ; but there is no justice in reasoning, from their existence, that our souls have lived previous to our present state, since it was as easy for the Deity to create at once

the idea of beauty within us, as the sense which brings to the soul intelligence that it exists in some outward shape. He does not clearly show his opinion of what the soul is; whether eternal *as* the Deity, created *by* the Deity, or how. In his answer to Simmias, he takes advantage of the general meaning of the words harmony, discord, &c. The soul might be a result, without being a harmony. But I think too many things to write, and some I have not had time to examine. Meanwhile, I can think over parts, and say to myself, ‘beautiful,’ ‘noble,’ and use this as one of my enchantments.”

‘I send two of your German books. It pains me to part with Ottilia. I wish we could learn books, as we do pieces of music, and repeat them, in the author’s order, when taking a solitary walk. But, now, if I set out with an Ottilia, this wicked fairy association conjures up such crowds of less lovely companions, that I often cease to feel the influence of the elect one. I don’t like Goethe so well as Schiller now. I mean, I am not so happy in reading him. That perfect wisdom and *merciless* nature seems cold, after those seducing pictures of forms more beautiful than truth. Nathless, I

should like to read the second part of Goethe's Memoirs, if you do not use it now."

"1832.—I am thinking how I omitted to talk a volume to you about the 'Elective Affinities.' Now I shall never say half of it, for which I, on my own account, am sorry. But two or three things I would ask :—

"What do you think of Charlotte's proposition, that the accomplished pedagogue must be tiresome in society ?

"Of Ottilia's, that the afflicted and ill-educated are oftentimes singled out by fate to instruct others, and her beautiful reasons why ?

"And what have you thought of the discussion touching graves and monuments ?

"I am now going to dream of your sermon, and of Ottilia's china-asters. Both shall be driven from my head to-morrow, for I go to town, allured by despatches from thence, promising much entertainment. Woe unto them if they disappoint me !

"Consider it, I pray you, as the 'nearest duty' to answer my questions, and not act as you did about the sphinx-song."

"I have not anybody to speak to, that does not talk common-place, and I wish to talk about such

an uncommon person—about Novalis, a wondrous youth, and who has only written one volume. That is pleasant ! I feel as though I could pursue my natural mode with him, get acquainted, then make my mind easy in the belief that I know all that is to be known. And he died at twenty-nine, and, as with Körner, your feelings may be single ; you will never be called upon to share his experience, and compare his future feelings with his present. And his life was so full and so still. Then it is a relief, after feeling the immense superiority of Goethe. It seems to me as if the mind of Goethe had embraced the universe. I have felt this lately, in reading his lyric poems. I am enchanted while I read. He comprehends every feeling I have ever had so perfectly, expresses it so beautifully ; but when I shut the book, it seems as if I had lost my personal identity ; all my feelings linked with such an immense variety that belong to beings I had thought so different. What can I bring ? There is no answer in my mind, except ‘It is so,’ or ‘It will be so,’ or ‘No doubt such and such feel so.’ Yet, while my judgment becomes daily more tolerant towards others, the same attracting and repelling work is going on in my feelings. But I

persevere in reading the great sage, some part of every day, hoping the time will come, when I shall not feel so overwhelmed, and leave off this habit of wishing to grasp the whole, and be contented to learn a little every day, as becomes a pupil.

“ But now the one-sidedness, imperfection, and glow, of a mind like that of Novalis, seem refreshingly human to me. I have wished fifty times to write some letters giving an account, first, of his very pretty life, and then of his one volume, as I re-read it, chapter by chapter. If you will pretend to be very much interested, perhaps I will get a better pen, and write them to you.” * *

NEED OF COMMUNION.

“ *Aug. 7, 1832.*—I feel quite lost, it is so long since I have talked myself. To see so many acquaintances, to talk so many words, and never tell my mind completely on any subject—to say so many things which do not seem called out, makes me feel strangely vague and movable.

“ ’Tis true, the time is probably near when I must live alone, to all intents and purposes,—separate entirely my acting from my thinking world, take care of my ideas without aid,—except

from the illustrious dead,—answer my own questions, correct my own feelings, and do all that hard work for myself. How tiresome 'tis to find out all one's self-delusion ! I thought myself so very independent, because I could conceal *some* feelings at will, and did not need the *same* excitement as other young characters did. And I am not independent, nor never shall be, while I can get anybody to minister to me. But I shall go where there is never a spirit to come, if I call ever so loudly.

“ Perhaps I shall talk to you about Körner, but need not write. He charms me, and has become a fixed star in the heaven of my thought ; but I understand all that he excites perfectly. I felt very *new* about Novalis,—‘the good Novalis,’ as you call him after Mr. Carlyle. He is, indeed, *good*, most enlightened, yet most pure ; every link of his experience framed—no, *beaten*—from the tried gold.

“ I have read, thoroughly, only two of his pieces, ‘Die Lehrlinge zu Sais,’ and ‘Heinrich von Ofterdingen.’ From the former I have only brought away piecemeal impressions, but the plan and treatment of the latter, I believe, I under-

stand. It describes the development of poetry in a mind ; and with this, several other developments are connected. I think I shall tell you all I know about it, some quiet time after your return, but, if not, will certainly keep a Novalis-journal for you some favourable season, when I live regularly for a fortnight."

" *June, 1833.*—I return Lessing. I could hardly get through Miss Sampson. E. Galeotti is good in the same way as Minna. Well-conceived and sustained characters, interesting situations, but never that profound knowledge of human nature, those minute beauties, and delicate vivifying traits, which lead on so in the writings of some authors, who may be nameless. I think him easily followed ; strong, but not deep."

" *May, 1833.*—*Groton.*—I think you are wrong in applying your artistical ideas to occasional poetry. An epic, a drama, must have a fixed form in the mind of the poet from the first ; and copious draughts of ambrosia quaffed in the heaven of thought, soft fanning gales and bright light from the outward world give muscle and bloom,—that is, give life,—to this skeleton. But all occasional poems must be moods, and can a mood have a

form fixed and perfect, more than a wave of the sea?"

"Three or four afternoons I have passed very happily at my beloved haunt in the wood, reading Goethe's 'Second Residence in Rome.' Your pencil-marks show that you have been before me. I shut the book each time with an earnest desire to live as he did,—always to have some engrossing object of pursuit. I sympathise deeply with a mind in that state. While mine is being used up by ounces, I wish pailfuls might be poured into it. I am dejected and uneasy when I see no results from my daily existence, but I am suffocated and lost when I have not the bright feeling of progression." * *

"I think I am less happy, in many respects, than you, but particularly in this. You can speak freely to me of all your circumstances and feelings, can you not? It is not possible for me to be so profoundly frank with any earthly friend. Thus my heart has no proper home; it only can prefer some of its visiting-places to others; and with deep regret I realize that I have, at length, entered on the concentrating stage of life. It was not time. I had been too sadly cramped. I had not

learned enough, and must always remain imperfect. Enough! I am glad I have been able to say so much."

"I have read nothing,—to signify,—except Goethe's '*Campagne in Frankreich*.' Have you looked through it, and do you remember his intercourse with the Wertherian Plessing? That tale pained me exceedingly. We cry, 'help, help,' and there is no help—in man at least. How often I have thought, if I could see Goethe, and tell him my state of mind, he would support and guide me! He would be able to understand; he would show me how to rule circumstances, instead of being ruled by them; and, above all, he would not have been so sure that all would be for the best, without our making an effort to act out the oracles; he would have wished to see me what Nature intended. But his conduct to Plessing and Ohlenschlager shows that to him, also, an appeal would have been vain."

"Do you really believe there is anything 'all-comprehending,' but religion? Are not these distinctions imaginary? Must not the philosophy of every mind, or set of minds, be a system suited to guide them, and give a home where they can

bring materials among which to accept, reject, and shape at pleasure? Novalis calls those, who harbour these ideas, 'unbelievers;' but hard names make no difference. He says with disdain, 'To *such*, philosophy is only a system which will spare them the trouble of reflecting.' Now this is just my case. I *do* want a system which shall suffice to my character, and in whose applications I shall have faith. I do not wish to *reflect* always, if reflecting must be always about one's identity, whether '*ich*' am the true '*ich*,' &c. I wish to arrive at that point where I can trust myself, and leave off saying, 'It seems to me,' and boldly feel, *It is SO TO ME*. My character has got its natural regulator, my heart beats, my lips speak truth, I can walk alone, or offer my arm to a friend, or if I lean on another, it is not the debility of sickness, but only wayside weariness. This is the philosophy *I* want; this much would satisfy *me*.

"Then Novalis says, 'Philosophy is the art of discovering the place of truth in every encountered event and circumstance, to attune all relations to truth.'

"Philosophy is peculiarly home-sickness; an overmastering desire to be at home.

“ I think so ; but what is there *all-comprehending*, eternally-conscious, about that ? ”

“ *Sept.* 1832.—‘ Not see the use of metaphysics ? ’ A moderate portion, taken at stated intervals, I hold to be of as much use as discipline of the faculties. I only object to them as having an absorbing and anti-productive tendency. But ’tis not always so ; may not be so with you. Wait till you are two years older, before you decide that ’tis your vocation. Time enough at six-and-twenty to form yourself into a metaphysical philosopher. The brain does not easily get too dry for *that*. Happy you, in these ideas which give you a tendency to optimism. May you become a proselyte to that consoling faith. I shall never be able to follow you, but shall look after you with longing eyes.”

“ *Groton.*—Spring has come, and I shall see you soon. If I could pour into your mind all the ideas which have passed through mine, you would be well entertained, I think, for three or four days. But no hour will receive aught beyond its own appropriate wealth.

“ I am at present engaged in surveying the level on which the public mind is poised. I no

longer lie in wait for the tragedy and comedy of life; the rules of its *prose* engage my attention. I talk incessantly with common-place people, full of curiosity to ascertain the process by which materials, apparently so jarring and incapable of classification, get united into that strange whole, the American public. I have read all Jefferson's letters, the North American, the daily papers, &c., without end. H—— seems to be weaving his Kantisms into the American system in a tolerably happy manner."

* * "George Thompson has a voice of uncommon compass and beauty; never sharp in its highest, or rough and husky in its lowest, tones. A perfect enunciation, every syllable round and energetic; though his manner was the one I love best, very rapid, and full of eager climaxes. Earnestness in every part,—sometimes impassioned earnestness,—a sort of 'Dear friends, believe, *pray* believe, I love you, and you MUST believe as I do' expression, even in the argumentative parts. I felt, as I have so often done before, if I were a man, the gift I would choose should be that of eloquence. That power of forcing the vital currents of thousands of human hearts into ONE

current, by the constraining power of that most delicate instrument, the voice, is so intense,—yes, I would prefer it to a more extensive fame, a more permanent influence.”

“ Did I describe to you my feelings on hearing Mr. Everett’s eulogy on Lafayette? No ; I did not. That was exquisite. The old, hackneyed story ; not a new anecdote, not a single reflection of any value ; but the manner, the *manner*, the delicate inflections of voice, the elegant and appropriate gesture, the sense of beauty produced by the whole, which thrilled us all to tears, flowing from a deeper and purer source than that which answers to pathos. This was fine : but I prefer the Thompson manner. Then there is Mr. Webster’s, unlike either ; simple grandeur, nobler, more impressive, less captivating. I have heard few fine speakers ; I wish I could hear a thousand.

“ Are you vexed by my keeping the six volumes of your Goethe ? I read him very little either ; I have so little time,—many things to do at home,—my three children, and three pupils besides, whom I instruct.

“ By the way, I have always thought all that was said about the anti-religious tendency of a

classical education to be old wives' tales. But their puzzles about Virgil's notions of heaven and virtue, and his gracefully-described gods and goddesses, have led me to alter my opinions ; and I suspect, from reminiscences of my own mental history, that if all governors do not think the same, 'tis from want of that intimate knowledge of their pupils' minds which I naturally possess. I really find it difficult to keep their *morale* steady, and am inclined to think many of my own sceptical sufferings are traceable to this source. I well remember what reflections arose in my childish mind from a comparison of the Hebrew history, where every moral obliquity is shown out with such naïveté, and the Greek history, full of sparkling deeds and brilliant sayings, and their gods and goddesses, the types of beauty and power, with the dazzling veil of flowery language and poetical imagery cast over their vices and failings."

"My own favourite project, since I began seriously to entertain any of that sort, is six historical tragedies ; of which I have the plans of three quite perfect. However, the attempts I have made on them have served to show me the vast difference between conception and execution.

Yet I am, though abashed, not altogether discouraged. My next favourite plan is a series of tales illustrative of Hebrew history. The proper junctures have occurred to me during my late studies on the historical books of the Old Testament. This task, however, requires a thorough and imbuing knowledge of the Hebrew manners and spirit, with a chastened energy of imagination, which I am as yet far from possessing. But if I should be permitted peace and time to follow out my ideas, I have hopes. Perhaps it is a weakness to confide to you embryo designs, which never may glow into life, or mock me by their failure."

"I have long had a suspicion that no mind can systematize its knowledge, and carry on the concentrating processes, without some fixed opinion on the subject of metaphysics. But that indisposition, or even dread of the study, which you may remember, has kept me from meddling with it, till lately, in meditating on the life of Goethe, I thought I must get some idea of the history of philosophical opinion in Germany, that I might be able to judge of the influence it exercised upon his mind. I think I can comprehend him every other way, and probably interpret him satis-

factorily to others,—if I can get the proper materials. When I was in Cambridge, I got Fichte and Jacobi; I was much interrupted, but some time and earnest thought I devoted. Fichte I could not understand at all; though the treatise which I read was one intended to be popular, and which he says must compel (*be-zwingen*) to conviction. Jacobi I could understand in details, but not in system. It seemed to me that his mind must have been moulded by some other mind, with which I ought to be acquainted in order to know him well,—perhaps Spinoza's. Since I came home, I have been consulting Buhle's and Tennemann's histories of philosophy, and dipping into Brown, Stewart, and that class of books."

"After I had cast the burden of my cares upon you, I rested, and read Petrarch for a day or two. But that could not last. I had begun to 'take an account of stock,' as Coleridge calls it, and was forced to proceed. He says few persons ever did this faithfully, without being dissatisfied with the result, and lowering their estimate of their supposed riches. With me it has ended in the most humiliating sense of poverty; and only just enough pride is left to keep your poor friend off

the parish. As it is, I have already asked items of several besides yourself ; but, though they have all given what they had, it has by no means answered my purpose ; and I have laid their gifts aside, with my other hoards, which gleamed so fairy bright, and are now, in the hour of trial, turned into mere slate-stones. I am not sure that even if I do find the philosopher's stone, I shall be able to transmute them into the gold they looked so like formerly. It will be long before I can give a distinct, and at the same time concise, account of my present state. I believe it is a great era. I am thinking now,—really thinking, I believe ; certainly it seems as if I had never done so before. If it does not kill me, something will come of it. Never was my mind so active ; and the subjects are God, the universe, immortality. But shall I be fit for anything till I have absolutely re-educated myself? Am I, can I make myself, fit to write an account of half a century of the existence of one of the master-spirits of this world? It seems as if I had been very arrogant to dare to think it ; yet will I not shrink back from what I have undertaken,—even by failure I shall learn much."

"I am shocked to perceive you think I am

writing the life of Goethe. No, indeed ! I shall need a great deal of preparation before I shall have it clear in my head. I have taken a great many notes ; but I shall not begin to write it, till it all lies mapped out before me. I have no materials for ten years of his life, from the time he went to Weimar, up to the Italian journey. Besides, I wish to see the books that have been written about him in Germany, by friend or foe. I wish to look at the matter from all sides. New lights are constantly dawning on me ; and I think it possible I shall come out from the Carlyle view, and perhaps from yours, and distaste you, which will trouble me.

* * “ How am I to get the information I want, unless I go to Europe ? To whom shall I write to choose my materials ? I have thought of Mr. Carlyle, but still more of Goethe’s friend, Von Muller. I dare say he would be pleased at the idea of a life of G. written in this hemisphere, and be very willing to help me. If you have anything to tell me, you will, and not mince matters. Of course, my impressions of Goethe’s works cannot be influenced by information I get about his *life* ; but, as to this latter, I suspect I must have been hasty in my inferences. I apply to you

without scruple. There are subjects on which men and women usually talk a great deal, but apart from one another. You, however, are well aware that I am very destitute of what is commonly *called* modesty. With regard to this, how fine the remark of our present subject: ‘Courage and modesty are virtues which every sort of society reveres, because they are virtues which cannot be counterfeited; also, they are known by the *same hue*.’ When that blush does not come naturally to my face, I do not drop a veil to make people think it is there. All this may be very unlovely, but it is *I*.”

CHANNING ON SLAVERY.

“This is a noble work. So refreshing its calm, benign atmosphere, after the pestilence-bringing gales of the day. It comes like a breath borne over some solemn sea which separates us from an island of righteousness. How valuable is it to have among us a man who, standing apart from the conflicts of the herd, watches the principles that are at work, with a truly paternal love for what is human, and may be permanent; ready at the proper point to give his casting-vote to the cause of Right! The author has amplified on the

grounds of his faith, to a degree that might seem superfluous, if the question had not become so utterly bemazed and bedarkened of late. After all, it is probable that, in addressing the public at large, it is *not* best to express a thought in as few words as possible ; there is much classic authority for diffuseness."

RICHTER.

Groton.—"Richter says, the childish heart vies in the height of its surges with the manly, only is not furnished with *lead* for sounding them.

"How thoroughly am I converted to the love of Jean Paul, and wonder at the indolence or shallowness which could resist so long, and call his profuse riches want of system ! What a mistake ! System, plan, there is, but on so broad a basis that I did not at first comprehend it ! In every page I am forced to pencil. I will make me a book, or, as he would say, bind me a bouquet from his pages, and wear it on my heart of hearts, and be ever refreshing my wearied inward sense with its exquisite fragrance. I must have improved, to love him as I do."

IV.—CHARACTER.—AIMS AND IDEAS OF LIFE.

“O friend, how flat and tasteless such a life!
 Impulse gives birth to impulse, deed to deed,
 Still toilsomely ascending step by step,
 Into an unknown realm of dark blue clouds.
 What crowns the ascent? Speak, or I go no further.
 I need a goal, an aim. I cannot toil,
Because the steps are here; in their ascent
 Tell me THE END, or I sit still and weep.”

“NATURLICHE TOCHTER.”

Translated by Margaret.

“And so he went onward, ever onward, for twenty-seven years
 —then, indeed, he had gone far enough.”

GOETHE'S words concerning Schiller.

I WOULD say something of Margaret's inward condition, of her aims and views in life, while in Cambridge, before closing this chapter of her story. Her powers, whether of mind, heart, or will, have been sufficiently indicated in what has preceded. In the sketch of her friendships and of her studies, we have seen the affluence of her intellect, and the deep tenderness of her woman's nature. We have seen the energy which she displayed in study and labour.

But to what *aim* were these powers directed?
 * Had she any clear view of the demands and

opportunities of life, any definite plan, any high, pure purpose? This is, after all, the test question, which detects the low-born and low-minded wearer of the robe of gold,—

“Touch them inwardly, they smell of copper.”

Margaret's life *had an aim*, and she was, therefore, essentially a moral person, and not merely an overflowing genius, in whom “impulse gives birth to impulse, deed to deed.” This aim was distinctly apprehended and steadily pursued by her from first to last. It was a high, noble one, wholly religious, almost Christian. It gave dignity to her whole career, and made it heroic.

This aim, from first to last, was SELF-CULTURE. If she ever was ambitious of knowledge and talent, as a means of excelling others, and gaining fame, position, admiration,—this vanity had passed before I knew her, and was replaced by the profound desire for a full development of her whole nature, by means of a full experience of life.

In her description of her own youth, she says, “VERY EARLY I KNEW THAT THE ONLY OBJECT IN LIFE WAS TO GROW.” This is the passage :—

“I was now in the hands of teachers, who had not, since they came on the earth, put to themselves one intelligent question as to their business here. Good dispositions and employment for the heart gave a tone to all they said, which was pleasing, and not perverting. They, no doubt, injured those who accepted the husks they proffered for bread, and believed that exercise of memory was study, and to know what others knew, was the object of study. But to me this was all penetrable. I had known great living minds,—I had seen how they took their food and did their exercise, and what their objects were. *Very early I knew that the only object in life was to grow.* I was often false to this knowledge, in idolatries of particular objects, or impatient longings for happiness, but I have never lost sight of it, have always been controlled by it, and this first gift of thought has never been superseded by a later love.”

In this she spoke truth. The good and the evil which flow from this great idea of self-development she fully realized. This aim of life, originally self-chosen, was made much more clear

to her mind by the study of Goethe, the great master of this school, in whose unequalled eloquence this doctrine acquires an almost irresistible beauty and charm.

“Wholly religious, and almost Christian,” I said, was this aim. It was religious, because it recognised something divine, infinite, imperishable in the human soul,—something divine in outward nature and providence, by which the soul is led along its appointed way. It was almost Christian in its superiority to all low, worldly, vulgar thoughts and cares : in its recognition of a high standard of duty, and a great destiny for man. In its strength, Margaret was enabled to do and bear, with patient fortitude, what would have crushed a soul not thus supported. Yet it is not the highest aim, for in all its forms, whether as personal improvement, the salvation of the soul, or ascetic religion, it has at its core a profound selfishness. Margaret’s soul was too generous for any low form of selfishness. Too noble to become an epicurean, too large-minded to become a modern ascetic, the defective nature of her rule of life, showed itself in her case, only in a certain supercilious tone toward “the vulgar herd,” in the

absence (at this period) of a tender humanity, and in an idolatrous hero-worship of genius and power. Afterward, too, she may have suffered from her desire for a universal human experience, and an unwillingness to see that we must often be content to enter the kingdom of heaven halt and maimed,—that a perfect development here must often be wholly renounced.

But how much better to pursue with devotion, like that of Margaret, an imperfect aim, than to worship with lip-service, as most persons do, even though it be in a loftier temple, and before a holier shrine! With Margaret, the doctrine of self-culture was a devotion to which she sacrificed all earthly hopes and joys,—everything but manifest duty. And so her course was “onward, ever onward,” like that of Schiller, to her last hour of life.

“ Burn’d in her cheek with ever deepening fire
The spirit’s YOUTH, which never passes by;—
The COURAGE which, though worlds in hate conspire,
Conquers, at last, their dull hostility ;—
The lofty FAITH, which, ever mounting higher,
Now presses on, now waiteth patiently,—
With which the good tends ever to his goal,
With which day finds, at last, the earnest soul.”

But this high idea which governed our friend’s

life, brought her into sharp conflicts, which constituted the pathos and tragedy of her existence,—first with her circumstances, which seemed so inadequate to the needs of her nature,—afterwards with duties to relatives and friends,—and, finally, with the law of the Great Spirit, whose will she found it so hard to acquiesce in.

The circumstances in which Margaret lived appeared to her life a prison. She had no room for utterance, no sphere adequate; her powers were unemployed. With what eloquence she described this want of a field! Often have I listened with wonder and admiration, satisfied that she exaggerated the evil, and yet unable to combat her rapid statements. Could she have seen in how few years a way would open before her, by which she could emerge into an ample field,—how soon she would find troops of friends, fit society, literary occupation, and the opportunity of studying the great works of art in their own home,—she would have been spared many a sharp pang.

Margaret, like every really earnest and deep nature, felt the necessity of a religious faith as the foundation of character. The first notice

which I find of her views on this point is contained in the following letter to one of her youthful friends, when only nineteen :—

* * *

“I have hesitated much whether to tell you what you ask about my religion. You are mistaken! I have not formed an opinion. I have determined not to form settled opinions at present. Loving or feeble natures need a positive religion, a visible refuge, a protection, as much in the passionate season of youth as in those stages nearer to the grave. But mine is not such. My pride is superior to any feelings I have yet experienced: my affection is strong admiration, not the necessity of giving or receiving assistance or sympathy. When disappointed, I do not ask or wish consolation,—I wish to know and feel my pain, to investigate its nature and its source: I will not have my thoughts diverted, or my feelings soothed; 'tis therefore that my young life is so singularly barren of illusions. I know, I feel the time must come when this proud and impatient heart shall be stilled, and turn from the ardours of search and action, to lean on something above. But—shall I say it?

—the thought of that calmer era is to me a thought of deepest sadness; so remote from my present being is that future existence, which still the mind may conceive. I believe in eternal progression. I believe in a God, a beauty and perfection to which I am to strive all my life for assimilation. From these two articles of belief, I draw the rules by which I strive to regulate my life. But, though I reverence all religions as necessary to the happiness of man, I am yet ignorant of the religion of Revelation. Tangible promises! well defined hopes! are things of which I do not *now* feel the need. At present, my soul is intent on this life, and I think of religion as its rule; and, in my opinion, this is the natural and proper course from youth to age. What I have written is not hastily concocted, it has a meaning. I have given you, in this little space, the substance of many thoughts, the clues to many cherished opinions. 'Tis a subject on which I rarely speak. I never said so much but once before. I have here given you all I know, or think, on the most important of subjects—could you but read understandingly!”

*

*

*

*

I find, in her journals for 1833, the following passages, expressing the religious purity of her aspirations at that time :—

“Blessed Father, nip every foolish wish in blossom. Lead me *any way* to truth and goodness ; but if it might be, I would not pass from idol to idol. Let no mean sculpture deform a mind disorderly, perhaps ill-furnished, but spacious and life-warm. Remember thy child, such as thou madest her, and let her understand her little troubles, when possible, oh, beautiful Deity !”

“*Sunday morning.*—Mr. ——— preached on the nature of our duties, social and personal. The sweet dew of truth penetrated my heart like balm. He pointed out the various means of improvement whereby the humblest of us may be beneficent at last. How just, how nobly true,—how modestly, yet firmly uttered,—his opinions of man,—of time,—of God !

“My heart swelled with prayer. I began to feel hope that time and toil might strengthen me to despise the ‘vulgar parts of felicity,’ and live as becomes an immortal creature. I am sure, quite sure, that I am getting into the right road. Oh,

lead me, my Father ! root out false pride and selfishness from my heart ; inspire me with virtuous energy, and enable me to improve every talent for the eternal good of myself and others."

A friend of Margaret, some years older than herself, gives me the following narrative :—

"I was," says she, in substance, "suffering keenly from a severe trial, and had secluded myself from all my friends, when Margaret, a girl of twenty, forced her way to me. She sat with me, and gave me her sympathy, and, with most affectionate interest, sought to draw me away from my gloom. As far as she was able, she gave me comfort. But as my thoughts were then much led to religious subjects, she sought to learn my religious experience, and listened to it with great interest. I told her how I had sat in darkness for two long years, waiting for the light, and in full faith that it would come ; how I had kept my soul patient and quiet,—had surrendered self-will to God's will,—had watched and waited till at last His great mercy came in an infinite peace to my soul. Margaret was never

weary of asking me concerning this state, and said, ‘I would gladly give all my talents and knowledge for such an experience as this.’

“Several years after,” continues this friend, “I was travelling with her, and we sat, one lovely night, looking at the river, as it rolled beneath the yellow moonlight. We spoke again of God’s light in the soul, and I said—‘Margaret! has that light dawned on *your* soul?’ She answered, ‘I think it has. But, oh! it is so glorious that I fear it will not be permanent, and so precious that I dare not speak of it, lest it should be gone.’

“That was the whole of our conversation, and I did not speak to her again concerning it.”

Before this time, however, during her residence at Cambridge, she seemed to reach the period of her existence in which she descended lowest into the depths of gloom. She felt keenly, at this time, the want of a home for her heart. Full of a profound tendency toward life, capable of an ardent love, her affections were thrown back on her heart, to become stagnant, and for a while to grow bitter there. Then it was that she felt how empty and worthless were all the attainments and triumphs of

the mere intellect; then it was that “she went about to cause her heart to despair of all the labour she had taken under the sun.” Had she not emerged from this valley of the shadow of death, and come on to a higher plane of conviction and hope, her life would have been a most painful tragedy. But, when we know how she passed on and up, ever higher and higher, to the mountain-top, leaving one by one these dark ravines and mist-shrouded valleys, and ascending to where a perpetual sunshine lay, above the region of clouds, and was able to overlook with eagle glance the widest panorama,—we can read, with sympathy indeed, but without pain, the following extracts from a journal:—

“It was Thanksgiving-day, (Nov. 1831,) and I was obliged to go to church, or exceedingly displease my father. I almost always suffered much in church from a feeling of disunion with the hearers and dissent from the preacher; but to-day, more than ever before, the services jarred upon me from their grateful and joyful tone. I was wearied out with mental conflicts, and in a mood of most childish, child-like sadness. I felt

within myself great power, and generosity, and tenderness; but it seemed to me as if they were all unrecognised, and as if it was impossible that they should be used in life. I was only one-and-twenty; the past was worthless, the future hopeless; yet I could not remember ever voluntarily to have done a wrong thing, and my aspiration seemed very high. I looked round the church, and envied all the little children; for I supposed they had parents who protected them, so that they could never know this strange anguish, this dread uncertainty. I knew not, then, that none could have any father but God. I knew not, that I was not the only lonely one, that I was not the selected *Œdipus*, the special victim of an iron law. I was in haste for all to be over, that I might get into the free air. * *

“ I walked away over the fields as fast as I could walk. This was my custom at that time, when I could no longer bear the weight of my feelings, and fix my attention on any pursuit; for I do believe I never voluntarily gave way to these thoughts one moment. The force I exerted I think, even now, greater than I ever knew in any other character. But when I could bear myself

no longer, I walked many hours, till the anguish was wearied out, and I returned in a state of prayer. To-day all seemed to have reached its height. It seemed as if I could never return to a world in which I had no place,—to the mockery of humanities. I could not act a part, nor seem to live any longer. It was a sad and fallow day of the late autumn. Slow processions of sad clouds were passing over a cold blue sky; the hues of earth were dull, and grey, and brown, with sickly struggles of late green here and there; sometimes a moaning gust of wind drove late, reluctant leaves across the path:—there was no life else. In the sweetness of my present peace, such days seem to me made to tell man the worst of his lot; but still that November wind can bring a chill of memory.

“ I paused beside a little stream, which I had envied in the merry fulness of its spring life. It was shrunken, voiceless, choked with withered leaves. I marvelled that it did not quite lose itself in the earth. There was no stay for me, and I went on and on, till I came to where the trees were thick about a little pool, dark and silent. I sat down there. I did not think; all was dark, and cold, and still. Suddenly the sun shone out with that

transparent sweetness, like the last smile of a dying lover, which it will use when it has been unkind all a cold autumn day. And, even then, passed into my thought a beam from its true sun, from its native sphere, which has never since departed from me. I remembered how, a little child, I had stopped myself one day on the stairs, and asked, how came I here? How is it that I seem to be this Margaret Fuller? What does it mean? What shall I do about it? I remembered all the times and ways in which the same thought had returned. I saw how long it must be before the soul can learn to act under these limitations of time and space, and human nature; but I saw, also, that it **MUST** do it,—that it must make all this false true,—and sow new and immortal plants in the garden of God, before it could return again. I saw there was no self; that selfishness was all folly, and the result of circumstance; that it was only because I thought self real that I suffered; that I had only to live in the idea of the **ALL**, and all was mine. This truth came to me, and I received it unhesitatingly; so that I was for that hour taken up into God. In that true ray most of the relations of earth seemed mere films, phenomena. * *

“ My earthly pain at not being recognised never went deep after this hour. I had passed the extreme of passionate sorrow ; and all check, all failure, all ignorance, have seemed temporary ever since. When I consider that this will be nine years ago next November, I am astonished that I have not gone on faster since ; that I am not yet sufficiently purified to be taken back to God. Still, I did but touch then on the only haven of Insight. You know what I would say. I was dwelling in the ineffable, the unutterable. But the sun of earth set, and it grew dark around ; the moment came for me to go. I had never been accustomed to walk alone at night, for my father was very strict on that subject, but now I had not one fear. When I came back, the moon was riding clear above the houses. I went into the churchyard, and there offered a prayer as holy, if not as deeply true, as any I know now ; a prayer, which perhaps took form as the guardian angel of my life. If that word in the Bible, *Selah*, means what grey-headed old men think it does, when they read aloud, it should be written here—*Selah* !

“ Since that day, I have never more been

completely engaged in self; but the statue has been emerging, though slowly, from the block. Others may not see the promise even of its pure symmetry, but I do, and am learning to be patient. I shall be all human yet; and then the hour will come to leave humanity, and live always in the pure ray.

“ This first day I was taken up; but the second time the Holy Ghost descended like a dove. I went out again for a day, but this time it was spring. I walked in the fields of Groton. But I will not describe that day; its music still sounds too sweetly near. Suffice it to say, I gave it all into our Father’s hands, and was no stern-weaving Fate more, but one elected to obey, and love, and at last know. Since then I have suffered, as I must suffer again, till all the complex be made simple, but I have never been in discord with the grand harmony.”

GROTON AND PROVIDENCE.

LETTERS AND JOURNALS.

“What hath not man sought out and found,
But his dear God? Who yet his glorious love
Embosoms in us, mellowing the ground
With showers, and frosts, with love and awe.”

HERBERT.

“No one need pride himself upon Genius, for it is the free gift of God; but of honest Industry and true devotion to his destiny any man may well be proud; indeed, this thorough integrity of purpose is itself the Divine Idea in its most common form, and no really honest mind is without communion with God.”

FIDELI.

“ God did anoint thee with his odorous oil,
To wrestle, not to reign ; and he assigns
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,
For younger fellow-workers of the soil
To wear for amulets. So others shall
Take patience, labour, to their hearts and hands,
From thy hands, and thy heart, and thy brave cheer,
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.”

ELIZABETH B. BARRETT.

“ While I was restless, nothing satisfied,
Distrustful, most perplexed—yet felt somehow
A mighty power was brooding, taking shape
Within me ; and this lasted till one night
When, as I sat revolving it and more,
A still voice from without said,—‘ Seest thou not,
Desponding child, whence came defeat and loss ?
Even from thy strength.’ ”

BROWNING.

III.

GROTON AND PROVIDENCE.

“HEAVEN’S discipline has been invariable to me, The seemingly most pure and noble hopes have been blighted ; the seemingly most promising connexions broken. The lesson has been endlessly repeated : ‘ Be humble, patient, self-sustaining ; hope only for occasional aids ; love others, but not engrossingly, for by being much alone your appointed task can best be done ! ’ What a weary work is before me, ere that lesson shall be fully learned ! Who shall wonder at the stiff-necked and rebellious folly of young Israel, bowing down to a brute image, though the prophet was bringing messages from the holy mountain, while one’s own youth is so obstinately idolatrous ! Yet will I try to keep the heart with diligence, nor ever fear that the sun is gone out because I shiver in the cold and dark ! ”

Such was the tone of resignation in which Margaret wrote from Groton, Massachusetts, whither, much to her regret, her father removed in the

spring of 1833. Extracts from letters and journals will show how stern was her schooling there, and yet how constant was her faith, that

“ God keeps a niche
In heaven to hold our idols ! And albeit
He breaks them to our faces, and denies
That our close kisses should impair their white,
I know we shall behold them raised, complete,
The dust shook from their beauty,—glorified,
New Memnons singing in the great God-light.”

SAD WELCOME HOME.

“ *Groton, April 25, 1833.*—I came hither, summoned by the intelligence, that our poor —— had met with a terrible accident. I found the dear child,—who had left me so full of joy and eagerness, that I thought with a sigh, not of envy, how happy he, at least, would be here,—burning with fever. He had expected me impatiently, and was very faint lest it should not be ‘Margaret’ who had driven up. I confess I greeted our new home with a flood of bitter tears. He behaves with great patience, sweetness, and care for the comfort of others. This has been a severe trial for mother, fatigued, too, as she was, and full of care ; but her conduct is angelic. I try to find consolation in all kinds of arguments, and to distract my thoughts

till the precise amount of injury is surely known. I am not idle a moment. When not with ——, in whose room I sit, sewing, and waiting upon him, or reading aloud a great part of the day, I solace my soul with Goethe, and follow his guidance into realms of the ‘Wahren, Guten, and Schönen.’”

OCCUPATIONS.

“*May*, 1833.—As to German, I have done less than I hoped, so much has the time been necessarily broken up. I have with me the works of Goethe, which I have not yet read, and am now engaged upon ‘Kunst and Alterthum,’ and ‘Campagne in Frankreich.’ I still prefer Goethe to any one, and, as I proceed, find more and more to learn, and am made to feel that my general notion of his mind is most imperfect, and needs testing and sifting.

“I brought your beloved Jean Paul with me, too. I cannot yet judge well, but think we shall not be intimate. His infinitely variegated, and certainly most exquisitely coloured web fatigues attention. I prefer, too, wit to humour, and daring imagination to the richest fancy. Besides, his philosophy and religion seem to be of the sighing

sort, and, having some tendency that way myself, I want opposing force in a favourite author. Perhaps I have spoken unadvisedly; if so, I shall recant on further knowledge."

And thus recant she did, when familiar acquaintance with the genial and sagacious humourist had won for him her reverent love.

RICHTER.

"Poet of Nature! Gentlest of the wise,
Most airy of the fanciful, most keen
Of satirists!—thy thoughts, like butterflies,
Still near the sweetest scented flowers have been;
With Titian's colours thou canst sunset paint,
With Raphael's dignity, celestial love;
With Hogarth's pencil, each deceit and feint
Of meanness and hypocrisy reprove;
Canst to devotion's highest flight sublime
Exalt the mind, by tenderest pathos' art,
Dissolve, in purifying tears, the heart,
Or bid it, shuddering, recoil at crime;
The fond illusions of the youth and maid,
At which so many world-form'd sages sneer,
When by thy altar-lighted torch display'd,
Our natural religion must appear.
All things in thee tend to one polar star,
Magnetic all thy influences are!"

"Some murmur at the 'want of system' in Richter's writings.

"A labyrinth! a flowery wilderness!
Some in thy 'slip-boxes' and 'honey-moons'
Complain of—*want of order*, I confess,
But not of *system* in its highest sense.

Who asks a guiding clue through this wide mind,
In love of Nature such will surely find.

In tropic climes, live like the tropic bird,
Whene'er a spice-fraught grove may tempt thy stay ;

Nor be by cares of colder climes disturb'd—

No frost the summer's bloom shall drive away ;

Nature's wide temple and the azure dome

Have plan enough for the free spirit's home ! ”

“ Your Schiller has already given me great pleasure. I have been reading the ‘ Revolt in the Netherlands ’ with intense interest, and have reflected much upon it. The volumes are numbered in my little book-case, and as the eye runs over them, I thank the friendly heart that put all this genius and passion within my power.

“ I am glad, too, that you thought of lending me ‘ Bigelow’s Elements. ’ I have studied the Architecture attentively, till I feel quite mistress of it all. But I want more engravings, Vitruvius, Magna Græcia, the Ionian Antiquities, &c. Meanwhile, I have got out all our tours in Italy. Forsyth, a book I always loved much, I have re-read with increased pleasure, by this new light. Goethe, too, studied architecture while in Italy ; so his books are full of interesting information ; and Madame De Stael, though not deep, is tasteful.”

“ American History ! Seriously, my mind is

regenerating as to my country, for I am beginning to appreciate the United States and its great men. The violent antipathies,—the result of an exaggerated love for, shall I call it by so big a name as the ‘poetry of being?’—and the natural distrust arising from being forced to hear the conversation of half-bred men, all whose petty feelings were roused to awkward life by the paltry game of local politics,—are yielding to reason and calmer knowledge. Had I but been educated in the knowledge of such men as Jefferson, Franklin, Rush! I have learned now to know them partially. And I rejoice if only because my father and I can have so much in common on this topic. All my other pursuits have led me away from him; here he has much information and ripe judgment. But, better still, I hope to feel no more that sometimes despairing, sometimes insolently contemptuous, feeling of incongeniality with my time and place. Who knows but some proper and attainable object of pursuit may present itself to the cleared eye? At any rate, wisdom is good, if it brings neither bliss nor glory.”

“*March*, 1834.—Four pupils are a serious and fatiguing charge for one of my somewhat ardent

and impatient disposition. Five days in the week I have given daily lessons in three languages, in Geography and History, besides many other exercises on alternate days. This has consumed often eight, always five hours of my day. There has been, also, a great deal of needle-work to do, which is now nearly finished, so that I shall not be obliged to pass my time about it when everything looks beautiful, as I did last summer. We have had very poor servants, and, for some time past, only one. My mother has been often ill. My grandmother, who passed the winter with us, has been ill. Thus, you may imagine, as I am the only grown-up daughter, that my time has been considerably taxed.

“ But as, sad or merry, I must always be learning, I laid down a course of study at the beginning of winter, comprising certain subjects about which I had always felt deficient. These were the History and Geography of Modern Europe beginning the former in the fourteenth century ; the Elements of Architecture ; the works of Alfieri, with his opinions on them ; the historical and critical works of Goethe and Schiller, and the outlines of history of our own country.

“I chose this time as one when I should have nothing to distract or dissipate my mind. I have nearly completed this course, in the style I proposed,—not minute or thorough, I confess,—though I have had only three evenings in the week, and chance hours in the day, for it. I am very glad I have undertaken it, and feel the good effects already. Occasionally I try my hand at composition, but have not completed anything to my own satisfaction. I have sketched a number of plans, but if ever accomplished, it must be in a season of more joyful energy, when my mind has been renovated, and refreshed by change of scene or circumstance. My translation of Tasso cannot be published at present, if it ever is.”

“My object is to examine thoroughly, as far as my time and abilities will permit, the evidences of the Christian Religion. I have endeavoured to get rid of this task as much and as long as possible; to be content with superficial notions, and, if I may so express it, to adopt religion as a matter of taste. But I meet with infidels very often; two or three of my particular friends are deists; and their arguments, with distressing sceptical notions of my own, are haunting me for ever.

I must satisfy myself; and having once begun, I shall go on as far as I can.

“My mind often swells with thoughts on these subjects, which I long to pour out on some person of superior calmness and strength, and fortunate in more accurate knowledge. I should feel such a quieting reaction. But, generally, it seems best that I should go through these conflicts alone. The process will be slower, more irksome, more distressing, but the results will be my own, and I shall feel greater confidence in them.”

MISS MARTINEAU.

In the summer of 1835, Margaret found a fresh stimulus to self-culture in the society of Miss Martineau, whom she met while on a visit at Cambridge, in the house of her friend, Mrs. Farrar. How animating this intercourse then was to her, appears from her journals.

“Miss Martineau received me so kindly as to banish all embarrassment at once. * * We had some talk about ‘Carlyleism,’ and I was not quite satisfied with the ground she took, but there was no opportunity for full discussion. * * I wished to give myself wholly up to receive an impression

of her. * * What shrewdness in detecting various shades of character! Yet, what she said of Hannah More and Miss Edgeworth grated upon my feelings.” * *

Again, later :—“ I cannot conceive how we chanced upon the subject of our conversation, but never shall I forget what she said. It has bound me to her. In that hour, most unexpectedly to me, we passed the barrier that separates acquaintance from friendship, and I saw how greatly her heart is to be valued.”

And again :—“ We sat together close to the pulpit. I was deeply moved by Mr. ——’s manner of praying for ‘our friends,’ and I put up this prayer for my companion, which I recorded, as it rose in my heart : ‘ Author of good, Source of all beauty and holiness, thanks to Thee for the purifying, elevating communion that I have enjoyed with this beloved and revered being. Grant that the thoughts she has awakened, and the bright image of her existence, may live in my memory, inciting my earth-bound spirit to higher words and deeds. May her path be guarded and blessed. May her noble mind be kept firmly poised in its

native truth, unsullied by prejudice or error, and strong to resist whatever outwardly or inwardly shall war against its high vocation. May each day bring to this generous seeker new riches of true philosophy and of Divine Love. And, amidst all trials, give her to know and feel that Thou, the All-sufficing, art with her, leading her on through eternity to likeness of Thyself.'”

“ I sigh for an intellectual guide. Nothing but the sense of what God has done for me, in bringing me nearer to himself, saves me from despair. With what envy I looked at Flaxman’s picture of Hesiod sitting at the feet of the Muse ! How blest would it be to be thus instructed in one’s vocation ! Anything would I do and suffer, to be sure that, when leaving earth, I should not be haunted with recollections of ‘ aims unreached, occasions lost.’ I have hoped some friend would do,—what none has ever yet done,—comprehend me wholly, mentally, and morally, and enable me better to comprehend myself. I have had some hope that Miss Martineau might be this friend, but cannot yet tell. She has what I want,—vigorous reasoning powers, invention, clear views of her objects,—and she has been

trained to the best means of execution. Add to this, that there are no strong intellectual sympathies between us, such as would blind her to my defects."

"A delightful letter from Miss Martineau. I mused long upon the noble courage with which she stepped forward into life, and the accurate judgment with which she has become acquainted with its practical details, without letting her fine imagination become tamed. I shall be cheered and sustained, amidst all fretting and uncongenial circumstances, by remembrance of her earnest love of truth and ardent faith."

ILLNESS.

"A terrible feeling in my head, but kept about my usual avocations. Read Ugo Foscolo's *Sepolcri*, and Pindemonti's answer, but could not relish either, so distressing was the weight on the top of the brain; sewed awhile, and then went out to get warm, but could not, though I walked to the very end of Hazel-grove, and the sun was hot upon me. Sat down, and, though seemingly able to think with only the lower part of my head, meditated literary plans, with full hope

that, if I could command leisure, I might do something good. It seemed as if I should never reach home, as I was obliged to sit down incessantly. * *

“For nine long days and nights, without intermission, all was agony,—fever and dreadful pain in my head. Mother tended me like an angel all that time, scarcely ever leaving me, night or day. My father, too, habitually so sparing in tokens of affection, was led by his anxiety to express what he felt towards me in stronger terms than he had ever used in the whole course of my life. He thought I might not recover, and one morning, coming into my room, after a few moments’ conversation, he said: ‘My dear, I have been thinking of you in the night, and I cannot remember that you have any *faults*. You have defects, of course, as all mortals have, but I do not know that you have a single fault.’ These words,—so strange from him, who had scarce ever in my presence praised me, and who, as I knew, abstained from praise as hurtful to his children,—affected me to tears at the time, although I could not foresee how dear and consolatory this extravagant expression of regard would very soon become.

The family were deeply moved by the fervency of his prayer of thanksgiving, on the Sunday morning when I was somewhat recovered; and to mother he said, ‘I have no room for a painful thought now that our daughter is restored.’

“For myself, I thought I should die; but I was calm, and looked to God without fear. When I remembered how much struggle awaited me if I remained, and how improbable it was that any of my cherished plans would bear fruit, I felt willing to go. But Providence did not so will it. A much darker dispensation for our family was in store.”

DEATH OF HER FATHER.

“On the evening of the 30th of September, 1835, my father was seized with cholera, and on the 2d of October was a corpse. For the first two days, my grief, under this calamity, was such as I dare not speak of. But since my father’s head is laid in the dust, I feel an awful calm, and am becoming familiar with the thoughts of being an orphan. I have prayed to God that duty may now be the first object, and self set aside. May I have light and strength to do what is right, in

the highest sense, for my mother, brothers, and sister.* *

“ It has been a gloomy week, indeed. The children have all been ill, and dearest mother is overpowered with sorrow, fatigue, and anxiety. I suppose she must be ill too, when the children recover. I shall endeavour to keep my mind steady, by remembering that there is a God, and that grief is but for a season. Grant, oh Father, that neither the joys nor sorrows of this past year shall have visited my heart in vain ! Make me wise and strong for the performance of immediate duties, and ripen me by what means Thou seest best for those which lie beyond. * *

“ My father’s image follows me constantly. Whenever I am in my room, he seems to open the door, and to look on me with a complacent, tender smile. What would I not give to have it in my power to make that heart once more beat with joy ! The saddest feeling is the remembrance of little things, in which I have fallen short of love and duty. I never sympathised in his liking for this farm, and secretly wondered how a mind which had, for thirty years, been so widely engaged in the affairs of men, could care so much

for trees and crops. But now, amidst the beautiful autumn days, I walk over the grounds, and look with painful emotions at every little improvement. He had selected a spot to place a seat where I might go to read alone, and had asked me to visit it. I contented myself with 'When you please, father;' but we never went! What would I not now give, if I had fixed a time, and shown more interest! A day or two since, I went there. The tops of the distant blue hills were veiled in delicate autumn haze; soft silence brooded over the landscape; on one side, a brook gave to the gently sloping meadow spring-like verdure; on the other, a grove,—which he had named for me,—lay softly glowing in the gorgeous hues of October. It was very sad. May this sorrow give me a higher sense of duty in the relationships which remain.

"Dearest mother is worn to a shadow. Sometimes, when I look on her pale face, and think of all her grief, and the cares and anxieties which now beset her, I am appalled by the thought that she may not continue with us long. Nothing sustains me now but the thought that God, who saw fit to restore me to life when I was so very

willing to leave it,—more so, perhaps, than I shall ever be again,—must have some good work for me to do.”

“*Nov.* 3, 1835.—I thought I should be able to write ere now, how our affairs were settled, but that time has not come yet. My father left no will, and, in consequence, our path is hedged in by many petty difficulties. He has left less property than we had anticipated, for he was not fortunate in his investments in real estate. There will, however, be enough to maintain my mother, and educate the children decently. I have often had reason to regret being of the softer sex, and never more than now. If I were an eldest son, I could be guardian to my brothers and sister, administer the estate, and really become the head of my family. As it is, I am very ignorant of the management and value of property, and of practical details. I always hated the din of such affairs, and hoped to find a life-long refuge from them in the serene world of literature and the arts. But I am now full of desire to learn them, that I may be able to advise and act, where it is necessary. The same mind which has made other attainments, can, in time, compass these, however uncongenial to its nature and habits.”

“I shall be obliged to give up selfishness in the end. May God enable me to see the way clear, and not to let down the intellectual, in raising the moral tone of my mind. Difficulties and duties became distinct the very night after my father’s death, and a solemn prayer was offered then, that I might combine what is due to others with what is due to myself. The spirit of that prayer I shall constantly endeavour to maintain. What ought to be done for a few months to come is plain, and, as I proceed, the view will open.”

TRIAL.

The death of her father brought in its train a disappointment as keen as Margaret could well have been called on to bear. For two years and more she had been buoyed up to intense effort by the promise of a visit to Europe for the end of completing her culture. And as the means of equitably remunerating her parents for the cost of such a tour, she had faithfully devoted herself to the teaching of the younger members of the family. Her honoured friends, Professor and Mrs. Farrar, who were about visiting the Old World, had invited her to be their companion; and, as Miss Martineau was to return to England in the

ship with them, the prospect before her was as brilliant with generous hopes as her aspiring imagination could conceive. But now, in her journal of January 1, 1836, she writes :—

“The New year opens upon me under circumstances inexpressibly sad. I must make the last great sacrifice, and, apparently, for evil to me and mine. Life, as I look forward, presents a scene of struggle and privation only. Yet ‘I bate not a jot of heart,’ though much ‘of hope.’ My difficulties are not to be compared with those over which many strong souls have triumphed. Shall I then despair? If I do, I am not a strong soul.”

Margaret’s family treated her, in this exigency, with the grateful consideration due to her love, and urgently besought her to take the necessary means, and fulfil her father’s plan. But she could not make up her mind to forsake them, preferring rather to abandon her long-cherished literary designs. Her struggles and her triumph thus appear in her letters :—

“*January 30th, 1836.*—I was a great deal with Miss Martineau, while in Cambridge, and love her more than ever. She is to stay till August,

and go to England with Mr. and Mrs. Farrar. If I should accompany them I shall be with her while in London, and see the best literary society. If I should go, you will be with mother the while, will not you? * Oh, dear E——, you know not how I fear and tremble to come to a decision. My temporal all seems hanging upon it, and the prospect is most alluring. A few thousand dollars would make all so easy, so safe. As it is, I cannot tell what is coming to us, for the estate will not be settled when I go. I pray to God ceaselessly that I may decide wisely.”

“ *April 17th, 1836.*—If I am not to go with you I shall be obliged to tear my heart, by a violent effort, from its present objects and natural desires. But I shall feel the necessity, and will do it if the life-blood follows through the rent. Probably, I shall not even think it best to correspond with you at all while you are in Europe. Meanwhile, let us be friends indeed. The generous and unfailing love which you have shown me during these three years, when I could be so little to you, your indulgence for my errors and fluctuations, your steady faith in my intentions, have

* Her eldest brother.

done more to shield and sustain me than any other earthly influence. If I must now learn to dispense with feeling them constantly near me, at least their remembrance can never, never be less dear. I suppose I ought, instead of grieving that we are soon to be separated, now to feel grateful for an intimacy of extraordinary permanence, and certainly of unstained truth and perfect freedom on both sides.

“As to my feelings, I take no pleasure in speaking of them ; but I know not that I could give you a truer impression of them, than by these lines which I translate from the German of Uhland. They are entitled ‘JUSTIFICATION.’

“Our youthful fancies, idly fired,
 The fairest visions would embrace ;
 These, with impetuous tears desired,
 Float upward into starry space ;
 Heaven, upon the suppliant wild,
 Smiles down a gracious *No!*—In vain
 The strife ! Yet be consoled, poor child,
 For the wish passes with the pain.

“But when from such idolatry
 The heart has turn'd, and wiser grown,
 In earnestness and purity
 Would make a nobler plan its own.—
 Yes, after all its zeal and care,
 Must of its chosen aim despair,—
 Some bitter tears may be forgiven
 By *Man*, at least,—*we trust, by Heaven.*”

BIRTH-DAY.

“ *May 23d*, 1836.—I have just been reading Goethe’s *Lebensregel*. It is easy to say ‘Do not trouble yourself with useless regrets for the past ; enjoy the present, and leave the future to God.’ But it is *not* easy for characters, which are by nature neither *calm* nor *careless*, to act upon these rules. I am rather of the opinion of Novalis, that ‘*Wer sich der höchsten Lieb ergeben Genest von ihnen Wunden nie.*’

“ But I will endeavour to profit by the instructions of the great philosopher who teaches, I think, what Christ did, to use without overvaluing the world.

“ Circumstances have decided that I must not go to Europe, and shut upon me the door, as I think, for ever, to the scenes I could have loved. Let me now try to forget myself, and act for others’ sakes. What I can do with my pen, I know not. At present, I feel no confidence or hope. The expectations so many have been led to cherish by my conversational powers, I am disposed to deem ill-founded. I do not think I can produce a valuable work. I do not feel in my

bosom that confidence necessary to sustain me in such undertakings,—the confidence of genius. But I am now but just recovered from bodily illness, and still heart-broken by sorrow and disappointment. I may be renewed again, and feel differently. If I do not soon, I will make up my mind to teach. I can thus get money, which I will use for the benefit of my dear, gentle, suffering mother,—my brothers and sister. This will be the greatest consolation to me, at all events.”

DEATH IN LIFE.

“ The moon tempted me out, and I set forth for a house at no great distance. The beloved south-west was blowing; the heavens were flooded with light, which could not diminish the tremulously pure radiance of the evening star; the air was full of spring sounds, and sweet spring odours came up from the earth. I felt that happy sort of feeling, as if the soul’s pinions were budding. My mind was full of poetic thoughts, and nature’s song of promise was chanting in my heart.

“ But what a change when I entered that human dwelling! I will try to give you an impression of what you, I fancy, have never come in contact

with. The little room—they have but one—contains a bed, a table, and some old chairs. A single stick of wood burns in the fireplace. It is not needed now, but those who sit near it have long ceased to know what spring is. They are all frost. Everything is old and faded, but at the same time as clean and carefully mended as possible. For all they know of pleasure is to get strength to sweep those few boards, and mend those old spreads and curtains. That sort of self-respect they have, and it is all of pride their many years of poortith has left them.

“And there they sit,—mother and daughter ! In the mother, ninety years have quenched every thought and every feeling, except an imbecile interest about her daughter, and the sort of self-respect I just spoke of. Husband, sons, strength, health, house and lands, all are gone. And yet these losses have not had power to bow that palsied head to the grave. Morning by morning she rises without a hope, night by night she lies down vacant or apathetic ; and the utmost use she can make of the day is to totter three or four times across the floor by the assistance of her staff. Yet, though we wonder that she is still permitted

to cumber the ground, joyless and weary, ‘the tomb of her dead self,’ we look at this dry leaf, and think how green it once was, and how the birds sung to it in its summer day.

“ But can we think of spring, or summer, or anything joyous or really life-like, when we look at the daughter?—that bloodless effigy of humanity, whose care is to eke out this miserable existence by means of the occasional doles of those who know how faithful and good a child she has been to that decrepit creature; who thinks herself happy if she can be well enough, by hours of patient toil, to perform those menial services which they both require; whose talk is of the price of pounds of sugar, and ounces of tea, and yards of flannel; whose only intellectual resource is hearing five or six verses of the Bible read every day,—‘ my poor head,’ she says, ‘ cannot bear any more;’ and whose only hope is the death to which she has been so slowly and wearily advancing, through many years like this.

“ The saddest part is, that she does *not wish* for death. She clings to this sordid existence. Her soul is now so habitually enwrapped in the meanest cares, that if she were to be lifted two or three

steps upward, she would not know what to do with life ; how, then, shall she soar to the celestial heights ? Yet she ought ; for she has ever been good, and her narrow and crushing duties have been performed with a self-sacrificing constancy, which I, for one, could never hope to equal.

“ While I listened to her,—and I often think it good for me to listen to her patiently,—the expressions you used in your letter, about ‘ drudgery,’ occurred to me. I remembered the time when I, too, deified the ‘ soul’s impulses.’ It is a noble worship ; but, if we do not aid it by a just though limited interpretation of what ‘ Ought ’ means, it will degenerate into idolatry. For a time it was so with me, and I am not yet good enough to love the *Ought*.

“ Then I came again into the open air, and saw those resplendent orbs moving so silently, and thought that they were perhaps tenanted, not only by beings in whom I can see the germ of a possible angel, but by myriads like this poor creature, in whom that germ is, so far as we can see, blighted entirely. I could not help saying, O my Father ! Thou, whom we are told art all Power, and also all Love, how canst Thou suffer such

even transient specks on the transparence of Thy creation ? These grub-like lives, undignified even by passion,—these life-long quenches of the spark divine,—why dost Thou suffer them ? Is not Thy paternal benevolence impatient till such films be dissipated ? ”

“ Such questionings once had power to move my spirit deeply ; now, they but shade my mind for an instant. I have faith in a glorious explanation, that shall make manifest perfect justice and perfect wisdom.”

LITERATURE.

Cut off from access to the scholars, libraries, lectures, galleries of art, museums of science, antiquities, and historic scenes of Europe, Margaret bent her powers to use such opportunities of culture as she could command in her solitary country-home. Journals and letters thus bear witness to her zeal :—

“ I am having one of my ‘ intense ’ times, devouring book after book. I never stop a minute, except to talk with mother, having laid all little duties on the shelf for a few days. Among other things, I have twice read through the life of Sir

J. Mackintosh ; and it has suggested so much to me, that I am very sorry I did not talk it over with you. It is quite gratifying, after my late chagrin, to find Sir James, with all his metaphysical turn, and ardent desire to penetrate it, puzzling so over the German philosophy, and particularly what I was myself troubled about, at Cambridge,—Jacobi's letters to Fichte.

“ Few things have ever been written more discriminating or more beautiful than his strictures upon the Hindoo character, his portrait of Fox, and his second letter to Robert Hall, after his recovery from derangement. Do you remember what he says of the want of brilliancy in Priestley's moral sentiments? Those remarks, though slight, seem to me to show the quality of his mind more decidedly than anything in the book. That so much learning, benevolence, and almost unparalleled fairness of mind, should be in a great measure lost to the world, for want of earnestness of purpose, might impel us to attach to the latter attribute as much importance as does the wise uncle in Wilhelm Meister.”

“ As to what you say of Shelley, it is true that the unhappy influences of early education

prevented his ever attaining clear views of God, life, and the soul. At thirty, he was still a seeker,—an experimentalist. But then his should not be compared with such a mind as ——’s, which, having no such exuberant fancy to tame, nor various faculties to develop, naturally comes to maturity sooner. Had Shelley lived twenty years longer, I have no doubt he would have become a fervent Christian, and thus have attained that mental harmony which was necessary to him. It is true, too, as you say, that we always feel a melancholy imperfection in what he writes. But I love to think of those other spheres in which so pure and rich a being shall be perfected; and I cannot allow his faults of opinion and sentiment to mar my enjoyment of the vast capabilities, and exquisite perception of beauty, displayed everywhere in his poems.’

“ *March 17th, 1836.*—I think Herschel will be very valuable to me, from the slight glance I have taken of it, and I thank Mr. F.; but do not let him expect anything of me because I have ventured on a book so profound as the *Novum Organum*. I have been examining myself with severity, intellectually as well as morally, and am

shocked to find how vague and superficial is all my knowledge. I am no longer surprised that I have appeared harsh and arrogant in my strictures to one who, having a better-disciplined mind, is more sensible of the difficulties in the way of really knowing and doing anything, and who, having more Wisdom, has more Reverence too. All that passed at your house will prove very useful to me; and I trust that I am approximating somewhat to that genuine humility which is so indispensable to true regeneration. But do not speak of this to ——, for I am not yet sure of the state of my mind.”

“ 1836.—I have, for the time, laid aside *De Stael* and *Bacon*, for *Martineau* and *Southey*. I find, with delight, that the former has written on the very subjects I wished most to talk out with her, and probably I shall receive more from her in this way than by personal intercourse,—for I think more of her character when with her, and am stimulated through my affections. As to *Southey*, I am steeped to the lips in enjoyment. I am glad I did not know this poet earlier; for I am now just ready to receive his truly exalting influences in some degree. I

think, in reading, I shall place him next to Wordsworth. I have finished Herschel, and really believe I am a little wiser. I have read, too, Heyne's Letters twice, Sartor Resartus once, some of Goethe's late diaries, Coleridge's Literary Remains, and drank a great deal from Wordsworth. By the way, do you know his 'Happy Warrior?' I find my insight of this sublime poet perpetually deepening."

"Mr. — says the Wanderjahre is '*wise*.' It must be presumed so; and yet one is not satisfied. I was perfectly so with my manner of interpreting the Lehrjahre; but this sequel keeps jerking my clue, and threatens to break it. I do not know our Goethe yet. I have changed my opinion about his religious views many times. Sometimes I am tempted to think that it is only his wonderful knowledge of human nature which has excited in me such reverence for his philosophy, and that no worthy fabric has been elevated on this broad foundation. Yet often, when suspecting that I have found a huge gap, the next turning it appears that it was but an air-hole, and there is a brick all ready to stop it. On the whole, though my enthusiasm for the Goetherian philosophy is

checked, my admiration for the genius of Goethe is in nowise lessened, and I stand in a sceptical attitude, ready to try his philosophy, and, if needs must, play the Eclectic.”

“ Did I write that a kind-hearted neighbour, fearing I might be *dull*, sent to offer me the use of a *book-caseful* of Souvenirs, Gems, and such-like glittering ware? I took a two or three year old ‘Token,’ and chanced on a story, called the ‘Gentle Boy,’ which I remembered to have heard was written by somebody in Salem. It is marked by so much grace and delicacy of feeling, that I am very desirous to know the author, whom I take to be a lady.” * *

“ With regard to what you say about the American Monthly, my answer is, I would gladly sell some part of my mind for lucre, to get the command of time; but I will not sell my soul: that is, I am perfectly willing to take the trouble of writing for money to pay the seamstress; but I am *not* willing to have what I write mutilated, or what I ought to say dictated to suit the public taste. You speak of my writing about Tieck. It is my earnest wish to interpret the German authors of whom I am most fond to such Ameri-

cans as are ready to receive. Perhaps some might sneer at the notion of my becoming a teacher; but where I love so much, surely I might inspire others to love a little; and I think this kind of culture would be precisely the counterpoise required by the utilitarian tendencies of our day and place. My very imperfections may be of value. While enthusiasm is yet fresh, while I am still a novice, it may be more easy to communicate with those quite uninitiated, than when I shall have attained to a higher and calmer state of knowledge. I hope a periodical may arise, by-and-by, which may think me worthy to furnish a series of articles on German literature, giving room enough and perfect freedom to say what I please. In this case, I should wish to devote at least eight numbers to Tieck, and should use the *Garden of Poesy*, and my other translations.

“ I have sometimes thought of translating his *Little Red Riding Hood*, for children. If it could be adorned with illustrations, like those in the ‘*Story without an End*,’ it would make a beautiful little book; but I do not know that this could be done in Boston. There is much meaning that children could not take in; but, as they

would never discover this till able to receive the whole, the book corresponds exactly with my notions of what a child's book should be.

"I should like to begin the proposed series with a review of Heyne's Letters on German Literature, which afford excellent opportunity for some preparatory hints. My plans are so undecided for several coming months, that I cannot yet tell whether I shall have the time and tranquillity needed to write out the whole course, though much tempted by the promise of perfect liberty. I could engage, however, to furnish at least two articles on Novalis and Körner. I trust you will be interested in my favourite Körner. Great is my love for both of them. But I wish to write something which shall not only *be* free from exaggeration, but which shall *seem* so, to those unacquainted with their works.

"I have so much reading to go through with this month, that I have but few hours for correspondents. I have already discussed five volumes in German, two in French, three in English, and not without thought and examination. * *

"Tell — that I read 'Titan' by myself, in the afternoons and evenings of about three weeks.

She need not be afraid to undertake it. Difficulties of detail may, perhaps, not be entirely conquered without a master or a good commentary, but she could enjoy all that is most valuable alone. I should be very unwilling to read it with a person of narrow or unrefined mind; for it is a noble work, and fit to raise a reader into that high serene of thought where pedants cannot enter."

FAREWELL TO GROTON.

"The place is beautiful, in its way, but its scenery is too tamely smiling and sleeping. My associations with it are most painful. There darkened round us the effects of my father's ill-judged exchange,—ill-judged, so far at least as regarded himself, mother, and me,—all violently rent from the habits of our former life, and cast upon toils for which we were unprepared: there my mother's health was impaired, and mine destroyed; there my father died; there were undergone the miserable perplexities of a family that has lost its head; there I passed through the conflicts needed to give up all which my heart had for years desired, and to tread a path for which I had no skill, and no call, except that it

must be trodden by some one, and I alone was ready. Wachuset and the Peterboro' hills are blended in my memory with hours of anguish as great as I am capable of suffering. I used to look at them towering to the sky, and feel that I, too, from birth, had longed to rise, and, though for the moment crushed, was not subdued.

“But if those beautiful hills, and wide, rich fields, saw this sad lore well learned, they also saw some precious lessons given in faith, fortitude, self-command, and unselfish love. There, too, in solitude, the mind acquired more power of concentration, and discerned the beauty of strict method; there too, more than all, the heart was awakened to sympathise with the ignorant, to pity the vulgar, to hope for the seemingly worthless, and to commune with the Divine Spirit of Creation, which cannot err, which never sleeps, which will not permit evil to be permanent, nor its aim of beauty in the smallest particular eventually to fail.”

WINTER IN BOSTON.

In the autumn of 1836 Margaret went to Boston, with the two-fold design of teaching Latin

and French in Mr. Alcott's school, which was then highly prosperous, and of forming classes of young ladies in French, German, and Italian.

Her view of Mr. Alcott's plan of Education was thus hinted in a journal, one day, after she had been talking with him, and trying to place herself in his mental position :—

Mr. A.—"O for the safe and natural way of Intuition! I cannot grope like a mole in the gloomy passages of experience. To the attentive spirit, the revelation contained in books is only so far valuable as it comments upon, and corresponds with, the universal revelation. Yet to me, a being social and sympathetic by natural impulse, though recluse and contemplative by training and philosophy, the character and life of Jesus have spoken more forcibly than any fact recorded in human history. This story of incarnate Love has given me the key to all mysteries, and showed me what path should be taken in returning to the Fountain of Spirit. Seeing that other redeemers have imperfectly fulfilled their tasks, I have sought a new way. They all, it seemed to me, had tried to influence the human being at too late a day,

and had laid their plans too wide. They began with men; I will begin with babes. They began with the world; I will begin with the family. So I preach the Gospel of the Nineteenth Century."

M.—"But, preacher, you make *three* mistakes.

"You do not understand the nature of Genius or creative power.

"You do not understand the reaction of matter on spirit.

"You are too impatient of the complex; and, not enjoying variety in unity, you become lost in abstractions, and cannot illustrate your principles."

On the other hand, Mr. Alcott's impressions of Margaret were thus noted in his diaries:—

"She is clearly a person given to the boldest speculation, and of liberal and varied acquirements. Not wanting in imaginative power, she has the rarest good sense and discretion. She adopts the Spiritual Philosophy, and has the subtlest perception of its bearings. She takes large and generous views of all subjects, and her disposition is singularly catholic. The blending of sentiment and of wisdom in her is most remarkable; and her taste is as fine as her prudence.

I think her the most brilliant talker of the day. She has a quick and comprehensive wit, a firm command of her thoughts, and a speech to win the ear of the most cultivated."

In her own classes Margaret was very successful, and thus in a letter sums up the results:—

"I am still quite unwell, and all my pursuits and propensities have a tendency to make my head worse. It is but a bad head,—as bad as if I were a great man! I am not entitled to so bad a head by anything I have done; but I flatter myself it is very interesting to suffer so much, and a fair excuse for not writing pretty letters, and saying to my friends the good things I think about them.

"I was so desirous of doing all I could, that I took a great deal more upon myself than I was able to bear. Yet now that the twenty-five weeks of incessant toil are over, I rejoice in it all, and would not have done an iota less. I have fulfilled all my engagements faithfully; have acquired more power of attention, self-command, and fortitude; have acted in life as I thought I would in my lonely meditations; and have gained some knowledge of means. Above all,—blessed be the Father

of our spirits!—my aims are the same as they were in the happiest flight of youthful fancy. I have learned too, at last, to rejoice in all past pain, and to see that my spirit has been judiciously tempered for its work. In future I may sorrow, but can I ever despair?

“The beginning of the winter was forlorn. I was always ill; and often thought I might not live, though the work was but just begun. The usual disappointments, too, were about me. Those from whom aid was expected failed, and others who aided did not understand my aims. Enthusiasm for the things loved best fled when I seemed to be buying and selling them. I could not get the proper point of view, and could not keep a healthful state of mind. Mysteriously a gulf seemed to have opened between me and most intimate friends, and for the first time for many years I was entirely, absolutely alone. Finally, my own character and designs lost all romantic interest, and I felt vulgarized, profaned, forsaken,—though obliged to smile brightly and talk wisely all the while. But these clouds at length passed away.

“And now let me try to tell you what has been

done. To one class I taught the German language, and thought it good success, when, at the end of three months, they could read twenty pages of German at a lesson, and very well. This class, of course, was not interesting, except in the way of observation and analysis of language.

“ With more advanced pupils, I read, in twenty-four weeks, Schiller’s *Don Carlos*, *Artists*, and *Song of the Bell*, besides giving a sort of general lecture on Schiller; Goethe’s *Hermann and Dorothea*, *Goetz von Berlichingen*, *Iphigenia*, first part of *Faust*,—three weeks of thorough study this, as valuable to me as to them,—and *Clavigo*,—thus comprehending samples of all his efforts in poetry, and bringing forward some of his prominent opinions; Lessing’s *Nathan*, *Minna*, *Emilia Galeotti*; parts of Tieck’s *Phantasmus*, and nearly the whole first volume of Richter’s *Titan*.

“ With the Italian class, I read parts of Tasso, Petrarch,—whom they came to almost adore,—Ariosto, Alfieri, and the whole hundred cantos of the *Divina Commedia*, with the aid of the fine Athenæum copy, Flaxman’s designs, and all the best commentaries. This last piece of work was and will be truly valuable to myself.

“ I had, besides, three private pupils, Mrs. ——, who became very attractive to me, ——, and little ——, who had not the use of his eyes. I taught him Latin orally, and read the History of England and Shakspeare’s historical plays in connexion. This lesson was given every day for ten weeks, and was very interesting, though very fatiguing. The labour in Mr. Alcott’s school was also quite exhausting. I, however, loved the children, and had many valuable thoughts suggested, and Mr. A.’s society was much to me.

“ As you may imagine, the Life of Goethe is not yet written ; but I have studied and thought about it much. It grows in my mind with everything that does grow there. My friends in Europe have sent me the needed books on the subject, and I am now beginning to work in good earnest. It is very possible that the task may be taken from me by somebody in England, or that in doing it I may find myself incompetent ; but I go on in hope, secure, at all events, that it will be the means of the highest culture.”

In addition to other labours, Margaret translated, one evening every week, German authors

into English, for the gratification of Dr. Channing ; their chief reading being in De Wette and Herder.

“ It was not very pleasant,” she writes, “ for Dr. C. takes in subjects more deliberately than is conceivable to us feminine people, with our habits of ducking, diving, or flying for truth. Doubtless, however, he makes better use of what he gets, and if his sympathies were livelier, he would not view certain truths in so steady a light. But there is much more talking than reading ; and I like talking with him. I do not feel that constraint which some persons complain of, but am perfectly free, though less called out than by other intellects of inferior power. I get too much food for thought from him, and am not bound to any tiresome formality of respect on account of his age and rank in the world of intellect. He seems desirous to meet even one young and obscure as myself on equal terms, and trusts to the elevation of his thoughts to keep him in his place.”

She found higher satisfaction still in his preaching :—

“ A discourse from Dr. C. on the spirituality of man’s nature. This was delightful ! I came away

in the most happy, hopeful, and heroic mood. The tone of the discourse was so dignified, his manner was so benignant and solemnly earnest, in his voice there was such a concentration of all his force, physical and moral, to give utterance to divine truth, that I felt purged as by fire. If some speakers feed intellect more, Dr. C. feeds the whole spirit. O for a more calm, more pervading faith in the divinity of my own nature! I am so far from being thoroughly tempered and seasoned, and am sometimes so presumptuous, at others so depressed. Why cannot I lay more to heart the text, ‘God is never in a hurry: let man be patient and confident?’ ”

PROVIDENCE.

In the spring of 1837, Margaret received a very favourable offer to become a principal teacher in the Greene Street School, at Providence, R. I.

“The proposal is, that I shall teach the elder girls my favourite branches, for four hours a-day,—choosing my own hours, and arranging the course,—for a thousand dollars a-year, if, upon trial, I am well enough pleased to stay. This would be independence, and would enable me to

do many slight services for my family. But, on the other hand, I am not sure that I shall like the situation, and am sanguine that, by perseverance, the plan of classes in Boston might be carried into full effect. Moreover, Mr. Ripley, who is about publishing a series of works on foreign literature, has invited me to prepare the 'Life of Goethe,' on very advantageous terms. This I should much prefer. Yet when the thousand petty difficulties which surround us are considered, it seems unwise to relinquish immediate independence."

She accepted, therefore, the offer which promised certain means of aiding her family, and reluctantly gave up the precarious, though congenial, literary project.

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES.

"The new institution of which I am to be 'Lady Superior' was dedicated last Saturday. People talk to me of the good I am to do; but the last fortnight has been so occupied in the task of arranging many scholars of various ages and unequal training, that I cannot yet realize this new era. * *

“The gulf is vast, wider than I could have conceived possible, between me and my pupils; but the sight of such deplorable ignorance, such absolute burial of the best powers, as I find in some instances, makes me comprehend, better than before, how such a man as Mr. Alcott could devote his life to renovate elementary education. I have pleasant feelings when I see that a new world has already been opened to them. * *

“Nothing of the vulgar feeling towards teachers, too often to be observed in schools, exists towards me. The pupils seem to reverence my tastes and opinions in all things; they are docile, decorous, and try hard to please; they are in awe of my displeasure, but delighted whenever permitted to associate with me on familiar terms. As I treat them like ladies, they are anxious to prove that they deserve to be so treated. * *

“There is room here for a great move in the cause of education; and if I could resolve on devoting five or six years to this school, a good work might, doubtless, be done. Plans are becoming complete in my mind, ways and means continually offer, and, so far as I have tried them, they succeed. I am left almost as much at liberty

as if no other person was concerned. Some sixty scholars are more or less under my care, and many of them begin to walk in the new paths pointed out. General activity of mind, accuracy in processes, constant looking for principles, and search after the good and the beautiful, are the habits I strive to develop. * *

“I will write a short record of the last day at school. For a week past I have given the classes in philosophy, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral science, short lectures on the true objects of study, with advice as to their future course; and to-day, after recitation, I expressed my gratification that the minds of so many had been opened to the love of good and beauty.

“Then came the time for last words. First, I called into the recitation room the boys who had been under my care. They are nearly all interesting, and have showed a chivalric feeling in their treatment of me. People talk of women not being able to govern boys: but I have always found it a very easy task. He must be a coarse boy, indeed, who, when addressed in a resolute, yet gentle manner, by a lady, will not try to merit her esteem. These boys have always rivalled one

another in respectful behaviour. I spoke a few appropriate words to each, mentioning his peculiar errors and good deeds, mingling some advice with more love, which will, I hope, make it remembered. We took a sweet farewell. With the younger girls I had a similar interview.

“Then I summoned the elder girls, who have been my especial charge. I reminded them of the ignorance in which some of them were found, and showed them how all my efforts had necessarily been directed to stimulating their minds,—leaving undone much which, under other circumstances, would have been deemed indispensable. I thanked them for the favourable opinion of my government which they had so generally expressed, but specified three instances in which I had been unjust. I thanked them, also, for the moral beauty of their conduct, bore witness that an appeal to conscience had never failed, and told them of my happiness in having the faith thus confirmed, that young persons can be best guided by addressing their highest nature. I declared my consciousness of having combined, not only in speech but in heart, tolerance and delicate regard for the convictions of their parents, with fidelity to my

own, frankly uttered. I assured them of my true friendship, proved by my never having cajoled or caressed them into good. Every word of praise had been earned ; all my influence over them was rooted in reality ; I had never softened nor palliated their faults ; I had appealed, not to their weakness, but to their strength ; I had offered to them, always, the loftiest motives, and had made every other end subordinate to that of spiritual growth. With a heartfelt blessing, I dismissed them ; but none stirred, and we all sat for some moments weeping. Then I went round the circle and bade each, separately, farewell."

PERSONS.

Margaret's Providence journals are made extremely piquant and entertaining, by her life-like portraiture of people and events ; and every page attests the scrupulous justice with which she sought to penetrate through surfaces to reality, and, forgetting personal prejudices, to apply universally the test of truth. A few sketches of public characters may suffice to show with what sagacious, all-observing eyes, she looked about her.

“At the whig caucus, I heard TRISTAM BURGESS, —‘The old bald Eagle!’ His baldness increases the fine effect of his appearance, for it seems as if the locks had retreated, that the contour of his very strongly marked head might be revealed to every eye. His *personnel*, as well as I could see, was fitted to command respect rather than admiration. He is a venerable, not a beautiful old man.

“He is a rhetorician—if I could judge from this sample; style inwoven and somewhat ornate, matter frequently wrought up to a climax, manner rather declamatory, though strictly that of a gentleman and a scholar. One art in his oratory was, no doubt, very effective, before he lost force and distinctness of voice. I allude to his way—after having reasoned a while, till he has reached the desired conclusion—of leaning forward, with hands reposing but figure very earnest, and communicating, confidentially as it were, the result to the audience. The impression produced in former days, when those low, emphatic passages could be distinctly heard, must have been very strong. Yet there is too much apparent trickery in this, to bear frequent repeti-

tion. His manner is well adapted for argument, and for the expression either of satire or of chivalric sentiment."

"Mr. JOHN NEAL addressed my girls on the destiny and vocation of Woman in this country. He gave, truly, a *manly* view, though not the view of common men, and it was pleasing to watch his countenance, where energy is animated by genius. He then spoke to the boys in the most noble and liberal spirit, on the exercise of political rights. If there is one among them who has the germ of a truly independent man, too generous to become a party tool, and with soul enough to think, as well as feel, for himself, those words were not spoken in vain. He was warmed up into giving a sketch of his boyhood. It was an eloquent narrative, and is ineffaceably impressed on my memory, with every look and gesture of the speaker. What gave chief charm to this history was its fearless ingenuousness. It was delightful to note the impression produced by his magnetic genius and independent character.

"In the evening we had a long conversation upon Woman, Whiggism, modern English Poets, Shakspeare, — and, in particular, Richard the

Third,—about which we had actually a fight. Mr. Neal does not argue quite fairly, for he uses reason while it lasts, and then helps himself out with wit, sentiment, and assertion. I should quarrel with his definitions upon almost every subject, but his fervid eloquence, brilliancy, endless resource, and ready tact, give him great advantage. There was a sort of exaggeration and coxcombry in his talk; but his lion-heart, and keen sense of the ludicrous, alike in himself as in others, redeem them. I should not like to have my motives scrutinised as he would scrutinise them, for I prefer rather to disclose them myself than to be found out; but I was dissatisfied in parting from this remarkable man before having seen him more thoroughly.”

“Mr. WHIPPLE addressed the meeting at length. His presence is not imposing, though his face is intellectual. It is difficult to look at him, for you cannot be taken prisoner by his eye, while, *en revanche*, he can look at you as long as he pleases; and, as usual, with one who can get the better of his auditors, he does not call out the best in them. His gestures are remarkably fine, free, graceful, and expressive. He has no natural advantages of

voice,—for it is without compass, depth, sweetness,—and has none of the winning tones which reach the inmost soul, and none of the tones of passionate energy, which raise you out of your own world into the speaker's. But his modulation is smooth, measured, dignified, though occasionally injured by too elaborate a swell, and his enunciation is admirable.

“ His theme was one which has been so thoroughly discussed, that novelty was not to be looked for ; but his method and arrangement were excellent, though parts were too much expanded, and the whole might well have been condensed. There were many felicitous popular hits. The humorous touches were skilful, and the illustrations on a broad scale good, though in single images he failed. Altogether, there was a pervading air of ease and mastery, which showed him fit to be a leader of the flock. Though not a man of the Webster class, he is among the first of the second class of men who apply their powers to practical purposes, and that is saying much.”

“ I went to hear JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, one of the most distinguished and influential, it is said,

of the English Quakers. He is a thick-set, beetle-browed man, with a well-to-do-in-the-world air of pious stolidity. I was grievously disappointed; for Quakerism has at times looked lovely to me, and I had expected at least a spiritual exposition of its doctrines from the brother of Mrs. Fry. But his manner was as wooden as his matter, and had no merit but that of distinct elocution. His sermon was a tissue of texts, ill selected, and worse patched together, in proof of the assertion that a belief in the Trinity is the one thing needful, and that reason, unless manacled by a creed, is the one thing dangerous. His figures were paltry, his thoughts narrowed down, and his very sincerity made corrupt by spiritual pride. One could not but pity his notions of the Holy Ghost, and his bat-like fear of light. His Man-God seemed to be the keeper of a mad-house, rather than the informing Spirit of all spirits. After finishing his discourse, Mr. G. sang a prayer, in a tone of mingled shout and whine, and then requested his audience to sit a while in devout meditation. For one, I passed the interval in praying for him, that the thick film of self-complacency might be removed from

the eyes of his spirit, so that he might no more degrade religion.

“ Mr. HAGUE is of the Baptist persuasion, and is very popular with his own sect. He is small, and carries his head erect; he has a high and intellectual, though not majestic forehead; his brows are lowering, and, when knit in indignant denunciation, give a thunderous look to the countenance, and beneath them flash, sparkle, and flame,—for all that may be said of light in rapid motion is true of them,—his dark eyes. Hazel and blue eyes with their purity, steadfastness, subtle penetration, and radiant hope, may persuade and win, but black is the colour to command. His mouth has an equivocal expression, but as an orator perhaps he gains power by the air of mystery this gives.

“ He has a very active intellect, sagacity, and elevated sentiment; and, feeling strongly that God is love, can never preach without earnestness. His power comes first from his glowing vitality of temperament. While speaking, his every muscle is in action, and all his action is towards one object. There is perfect *abandon*. He is permeated, overborne, by his thought.

This lends a charm above grace, though incessant nervousness and heat injure his manner. He is never violent, though often vehement; pleading tones in his voice redeem him from coarseness, even when most eager; and he throws himself into the hearts of his hearers, not in weak need of sympathy, but in the confidence of generous emotion. His second attraction is his individuality. He speaks direct from the conviction of his spirit, without temporizing, or artificial method. His is the 'unpremeditated art,' and therefore successful. He is full of intellectual life; his mind has not been fettered by dogmas, and the worship of beauty finds a place there. I am much interested in this truly animated being."

"Mr. R. H. DANA has been giving us readings in the English dramatists, beginning with Shakespeare. The introductory was beautiful. After assigning to literature its high place in the education of the human soul, he announced his own view in giving these readings: that he should never pander to a popular love of excitement, but quietly, without regard to brilliancy or effect, would tell what had struck him in these poets;

that he had no belief in artificial processes of acquisition or communication, and having never learned anything except through love, he had no hope of teaching any but loving spirits, &c. All this was arrayed in a garb of most delicate grace; but a man of such genuine refinement undervalues the cannon-blasts and rockets which are needed to rouse the attention of the vulgar. His naïve gestures, the rapt expression of his face, his introverted eye, and the almost childlike simplicity of his pathos, carry one back into a purer atmosphere, to live over again youth's fresh emotions. I greatly enjoyed his readings in Hamlet, and have reviewed in connexion what Goethe and Coleridge have said. Both have successfully seized on the main points in the character of Hamlet, and Mr. D. took nearly the same range. His views of Ophelia, however, are unspeakably more just than are those of Serlo in Wilhelm Meister. I regret that the whole course is not to be on Shakspeare, for I should like to read with him all the plays.

“ I never have met with a person of finer perceptions. He leaves out nothing; though he over-refines on some passages. He has the most

exquisite taste, and freshens the souls of his hearers with ever new beauty. He is greatly indebted to the delicacy of his physical organization for the delicacy of his mental appreciation. But when he has told you what *he* likes, the pleasure of intercourse is over ; for he is a man of prejudice more than of reason ; and though he can make a lively *exposé* of his thoughts and feelings, he does not justify them. In a word, Mr. Dana has the charms and the defects of one whose object in life has been to preserve his individuality unprofaned."

ART.

While residing at Providence, and during her visits to Boston, in her vacations, Margaret's mind was opening more and more to the charms of art.

"The Ton-Kunst, the Ton-Welt, give me now more stimulus than the written Word ; for music seems to contain everything in nature, unfolded into perfect harmony. In it the *all* and *each* are manifested in most rapid transition ; the spiral and undulatory movement of beautiful creation is

felt throughout, and, as we listen, thought is most clearly, because most mystically, perceived. * *

“ I have been to hear Neukomm’s Oratorio of David. It is to music what Barry Cornwall’s verses and Talfourd’s *Ion* are to poetry. It is completely modern, and befits an age of consciousness. Nothing can be better arranged as a drama; the parts are in excellent gradation, the choruses are grand and effective, the composition, as a whole, brilliantly imposing. Yet it was dictated by taste and science only. Where are the enrapturing visions from the celestial world which shone down upon Haydn and Mozart; where the revelations from the depths of man’s nature, which impart such passion to the symphonies of Beethoven; where even the fascinating fairy-land, gay with delight, of Rossini? Oh, Genius! none but thee shall make our hearts and heads throb, our cheeks crimson, our eyes overflow, or fill our whole being with the serene joy of faith. * *

“ I went to see Vandenhoff twice, in *Brutus* and *Virginus*. Another fine specimen of the conscious school; no inspiration, yet much taste. Spite of the thread-paper *Tituses*, the chambermaid *Virginias*, the washerwoman *Tullias*, and the

people, made up of half-a-dozen chimney-sweeps, in carters' frocks and red nightcaps, this man had power to recal a thought of the old stately Roman, with his unity of will and deed. He was an admirable *father*, that fairest, noblest part,—with a happy mixture of dignity and tenderness, blending the delicate sympathy of the companion with the calm wisdom of the teacher, and showing beneath the zone of duty a heart that has not forgot to throb with youthful love. This character,—which did actual fathers know how to be, they would fulfil the order of nature, and image Deity to their children,—Vandenhoff represented sufficiently, at least, to call up the beautiful ideal.”

FANNY KEMBLE.

“ When in Boston, I saw the Kembles twice,—in ‘ Much ado about Nothing,’ and ‘ The Stranger.’ The first night I felt much disappointed in Miss K. In the gay parts a coquettish, courtly manner marred the wild mirth and wanton wit of Beatrice. Yet, in everything else, I liked her conception of the part; and where she urges Benedict to fight with Claudio, and where she reads Benedict’s

sonnet, she was admirable. But I received no more pleasure from Miss K.'s acting out the part than I have done in reading it, and this disappointed me. Neither did I laugh, but thought all the while of Miss K.,—how very graceful she was, and whether this and that way of rendering the part was just. I do not believe she has comic power within herself, though tasteful enough to comprehend any part. So I went home, vexed because my 'heart was not full,' and my 'brain not on fire' with enthusiasm. I drank my milk, and went to sleep, as on other dreary occasions, and dreamed not of Miss Kemble.

"Next night, however, I went expectant, and all my soul was satisfied. I saw her at a favourable distance, and she looked beautiful. And as the scene rose in interest, her attitudes, her gestures, had the expression which an Angelo could give to sculpture. After she tells her story,—and I was almost suffocated by the effort she made to divulge her sin and fall,—she sunk to the earth, her head bowed upon her knee, her white drapery falling in large, graceful folds about this broken piece of beautiful humanity, *crushed* in the very manner so well described by Scott, when speaking

of a far different person,—‘not as one who intentionally stoops, kneels, or prostrates himself to excite compassion, but like a man borne down on all sides by the pressure of some invisible force, which crushes him to the earth without power of resistance.’ A movement of abhorrence from me, as her insipid confidante turned away, attested the triumph of the poet-actress. Had not all been over in a moment, I believe I could not have refrained from rushing forward to raise the fair, frail being, who seemed so prematurely humbled in her parent dust. I burst into tears; and, with the stifled, hopeless feeling of a real sorrow, continued to weep till the very end; nor could I recover till I left the house.

“That is genius, which could give such life to this play; for, if I may judge from other parts, it is defaced by inflated sentiments, and verified by few natural touches. I wish I had it to read, for I should like to recal her every tone and look.”

“I have been studying Flaxman and Retzsch. How pure, how immortal, the language of Form! Fools cannot fancy they fathom its meaning; witless *dilletanti* cannot degrade it by hackneyed usage; none but genius can create or reproduce

it. Unlike the colourist, he who expresses his thought in form is secure as man can be against the ravages of time."

"I went to the Athenæum in an agonizing conflict of mind, when some high influence was needed to rouse me from the state of sickly sensitiveness, which, much as I despise, I cannot wholly conquer. How soothing it was to feel the blessed power of the Ideal world, to be surrounded once more with the records of lives poured out in embodying thought in beauty! I seemed to breathe my native atmosphere, and smoothed my ruffled pinions."

"No wonder God made a world to express his thought. Who, that has a soul for beauty, does not feel the need of creating, and that the power of creation alone can satisfy the spirit? When I thus reflect, the artist seems the only fortunate man. Had I but as much creative genius as I have apprehensiveness!"

"How transcendently lovely was the face of one young angel by Raphael! It was the perfection of physical, moral, and mental life. Variegated wings, of pinkish-purple touched with green, like the breasts of doves, and in perfect harmony with

the complexion, spring from the shoulders upwards, and against them leans the divine head. The eye seems fixed on the centre of being, and the lips are gently parted, as if uttering strains of celestial melody."

"The head of Aspasia was instinct with the voluptuousness of intellect. From the eyes, the cheek, the divine lip, one might hive honey. Both the Loves were exquisite: one, that zephyr sentiment which visits all the roses of life; the other, the Amore Greco, may be fitly described in these words of Landor:—'There is a gloom in deep love, as in deep water; there is a silence in it which suspends the foot, and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface; the Muses themselves approach it with a tardy and a timid step, with a low and tremulous and melancholy song.'

"The Sibyl I understood. What grace in that beautiful oval! what apprehensiveness in the eye! Such is female Genius; it alone understands the God. The Muses only sang the praises of Apollo; the Sibyls interpreted his will. Nay, she to whom it was offered, refused the divine union, and preferred remaining a satellite to being absorbed into

the sun. You read in the eye of this one, and the observation is confirmed by the low forehead, that the secret of her inspiration lay in the passionate enthusiasm of her nature, rather than in the ideal perfection of any faculty.

“A Christ, by Raphael, that I saw the other night, brought Christianity more home to my heart, made me more long to be like Jesus, than ever did sermon. It is from one of the Vatican frescoes. The Deity,—a stern, strong, wise man, of about forty-five, in a square velvet cap, truly the Jewish God, inflexibly just, yet jealous and wrathful,—is at the top of the picture, looking with a gaze of almost frowning scrutiny down into his world. A step below is the Son. Stately angelic shapes kneel near him, in dignified adoration,—brothers, but not peers. A cloud of more ecstatic seraphs floats behind the Father. At the feet of the Son is the Holy Ghost, the Heavenly Dove. In the description, by a connoisseur, of this picture, read to me while I was looking at it, it is spoken of as in Raphael’s first manner, cold, hard, trammeled. But to me how did that face proclaim the Infinite Love! His head is bent back, as if seeking to behold the Father. His attitude

expresses the need of adoring something higher, in order to keep him at his highest. What sweetness, what purity, in the eyes! I can never express it; but I felt, when looking at it, the beauty of reverence, of self-sacrifice, to a degree that stripped the Apollo of his beams."

MAGNANIMITY.

Immediately after reading Miss Martineau's book on America, Margaret felt bound, in honour, to write her a letter, the magnanimity of which is brought out in full relief, by contrast with the expressions already given of her affectionate regard. Extracts from this letter, recorded in her journals, come here rightfully in place:—

"On its first appearance, the book was greeted by a volley of coarse and outrageous abuse, and the nine days' wonder was followed by a nine days' hue-and-cry. It was garbled, misrepresented, scandalously illtreated. This was all of no consequence. The opinion of the majority you will find expressed in a late number of the 'North American Review.' I should think the article, though ungenerous, not more so than great part of the critiques upon your book.

“ The minority may be divided into two classes : The one, consisting of those who knew you but slightly, either personally, or in your writings. These have now read your book ; and, seeing in it your high ideal standard, genuine independence, noble tone of sentiment, vigour of mind and powers of picturesque description, they value your book very much, and rate you higher for it.

“ The other comprises those who were previously aware of these high qualities, and who, seeing in a book to which they had looked for a lasting monument to your fame, a degree of presumptuousness, irreverence, inaccuracy, hasty generalization, and ultraism on many points, which they did not expect, lament the haste in which you have written, and the injustice which you have consequently done to so important a task, and to your own powers of being and doing. To this class I belong.

“ I got the book as soon as it came out,—long before I received the copy endeared by your handwriting,—and devoted myself to reading it. I gave myself up to my natural impressions, without seeking to ascertain those of others. Frequently I felt pleasure and admiration, but more frequently disappointment, sometimes positive distaste.

“ There are many topics treated of in this book of which I am not a judge ; but I do pretend, even where I cannot criticise in detail, to have an opinion as to the general tone of thought. When Herschel writes his ‘ Introduction to Natural Philosophy,’ I cannot test all he says, but I cannot err about his fairness, his manliness, and wide range of knowledge. When Jouffroy writes his lectures, I am not conversant with all his topics of thought, but I can appreciate his lucid style and admirable method. When Webster speaks on the currency, I do not understand the subject, but I do understand his mode of treating it, and can see what a blaze of light streams from his torch. When Harriet Martineau writes about America, I often cannot test that rashness and inaccuracy of which I hear so much, but I can feel that they exist. A want of soundness, of habits of patient investigation, of completeness, of arrangement, are felt throughout the book ; and, for all its fine descriptions of scenery, breadth of reasoning, and generous daring, I cannot be happy in it, because it is not worthy of my friend, and I think a few months given to ripen it, to balance, compare, and mellow, would have made it so. * *

“ Certainly you show no spirit of harshness towards this country in general. I think your tone most kindly. But many passages are deformed by intemperance of epithet. * * Would your heart, could you but investigate the matter, approve such overstatement, such a crude, intemperate tirade as you have been guilty of about Mr. Alcott,—a true and noble man, a philanthropist, whom a true and noble woman, also a philanthropist, should have delighted to honour; whose disinterested and resolute efforts, for the redemption of poor humanity, all independent and faithful minds should sustain, since the ‘broadcloth’ vulgar will be sure to assail them; a philosopher, worthy of the palmy times of ancient Greece; a man whom Carlyle and Berkely, whom you so uphold, would delight to honour; a man whom the worldlings of Boston hold in as much horror as the worldlings of ancient Athens did Socrates. They smile to hear their verdict confirmed from the other side of the Atlantic, by their censor, Harriet Martineau.

“ I do not like that your book should be an abolition book. You might have borne your testimony as decidedly as you pleased; but why leaven the whole book with it? This subject haunts us

on almost every page. It *is* a great subject, but your book had other purposes to fulfil.

“I have thought it right to say all this to you, since I felt it. I have shrunk from the effort, for I fear that I must lose you. Not that I think all authors are like Gil Blas’ archbishop. No; if your heart turns from me, I shall still love you, still think you noble. I know it must be so trying to fail of sympathy, at such a time, where we expect it. And, besides, I felt from the book that the sympathy between us is less general than I had supposed, it was so strong on several points. It is strong enough for me to love you ever, and I could no more have been happy in your friendship, if I had not spoken out now.”

SPIRITUAL LIFE.

“You question me as to the nature of the benefits conferred upon me by Mr. E.’s preaching. I answer, that his influence has been more beneficial to me than that of any American, and that from him I first learned what is meant by an inward life. Many other springs have since fed the stream of living waters, but he first opened the

fountain. That the 'mind is its own place,' was a dead phrase to me, till he cast light upon my mind. Several of his sermons stand apart in memory, like landmarks of my spiritual history. It would take a volume to tell what this one influence did for me. But perhaps I shall some time see that it was best for me to be forced to help myself."

"Some remarks which I made last night trouble me, and I cannot fix my attention upon other things till I have qualified them. I suffered myself to speak in too unmeasured terms, and my expressions were fitted to bring into discredit the religious instruction which has been given me, or which I have sought.

"I do not think 'all men are born for the purpose of unfolding beautiful ideas;' for the vocation of many is evidently the culture of affections by deeds of kindness. But I do think that the vocations of men and women differ, and that those who are forced to act out of their sphere are shorn of inward and outward brightness.

"For myself, I wish to say, that, if I am in a mood of darkness and despondency, I nevertheless consider such a mood unworthy of a Chris-

tian, or indeed of any one who believes in the immortality of the soul. No one, who had steady faith in this and in the goodness of God, could be otherwise than cheerful. I reverence the serenity of a truly religious mind so much, that I think, if I live, I may sometime attain to it.

“ Although I do not believe in a Special Providence regulating outward events, and could not reconcile such a belief with what I have seen of life, I do not the less believe in the paternal government of a Deity. That He should visit the souls of those who seek Him seems to me the nobler way to conceive of his influence. And if there were not some error in my way of seeking, I do not believe I should suffer from languor or deadness on spiritual subjects, at the time when I have most need to feel myself at home there. To find this error is my earnest wish ; and perhaps I am now travelling to that end, though by a thorny road. It is a mortification to find so much yet to do ; for at one time the scheme of things seemed so clear, that, with Cromwell, I might say, ‘ I was once in grace.’ With my mind I prize high objects as much as then : it is my heart which is cold. And sometimes I fear that the necessity of

urging them on those under my care dulls my sense of their beauty. It is so hard to prevent one's feelings from evaporating in words."

" 'The faint sickness of a wounded heart.' How frequently do these words of Beckford recur to my mind ! His prayer, imperfect as it is, says more to me than many a purer aspiration. It breathes such an experience of impassioned anguish. He had everything,—health, personal advantages, almost boundless wealth, genius, exquisite taste, culture ; he could, in some way, express his whole being. Yet well-nigh he sank beneath the sickness of the wounded heart ; and solitude, 'country of the unhappy,' was all he craved at last.

" Goethe, too, says he has known, in all his active, wise, and honoured life, no four weeks of happiness. This teaches me on the other side ; for, like Goethe, I have never given way to my feelings, but have lived active, thoughtful, seeking to be wise. Yet I have long days and weeks of heartache ; and at those times, though I am busy every moment, and cultivate every pleasant feeling, and look always upwards to the pure ideal region, yet this ache is like a bodily wound, whose pain haunts even when it is not attended to, and

disturbs the dreams of the patient who has fallen asleep from exhaustion.

“ There is a German in Boston, who has a wound in his breast, received in battle long ago. It never troubles him, except when he sings, and then, if he gives out his voice with much expression, it opens, and cannot, for a long time, be stanchd again. So with me: when I rise into one of those rapturous moods of thought, such as I had a day or two since, my wound opens again, and all I can do is to be patient, and let it take its own time to skin over. I see it will never do more. Some time ago I thought the barb was fairly out; but no, the fragments rankle there still, and will, while there is any earth attached to my spirit. Is it not because, in my pride, I held the mantle close, and let the weapon, which some friendly physician might have extracted, splinter in the wound? ”

“ *Sunday, July, 1838.*—I partook, for the first time, of the Lord’s Supper. I had often wished to do so, but had not been able to find a clergyman,—from whom I could be willing to receive it,—willing to admit me on my own terms. Mr.

H—— did so ; and I shall ever respect and value him, if only for the liberality he displayed on this occasion. It was the Sunday after the death of his wife, a lady whom I truly honoured, and should, probably, had we known one another longer, have also loved. She was the soul of truth and honour ; her mind was strong, her reverence for the noble and beautiful fervent, her energy in promoting the best interests of those who came under her influence unusual. She was as full of wit and playfulness as of goodness. Her union with her husband was really one of mind and heart, of mutual respect and tenderness ; likeness in unlikeness made it strong. I wished particularly to share in this rite on an occasion so suited to bring out its due significance.”

FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

“The Sun, the Moon, the Waters, and the Air,
The hopeful, holy, terrible, and fair,
All that is ever speaking, never spoken,
Spells that are ever breaking, never broken,
Have play'd upon my soul ; and every string
Confess'd the touch, which once could make it ring
Celestial notes. And still, though changed the tone,
Though damp and jarring fall the lyre hath known,

It would, if fitly play'd, its deep notes wove
Into one tissue of belief and love,
Yield melodies for angel audience meet,
And pæans fit Creative Power to greet.
O injured lyre ! thy golden frame is marr'd,
No garlands deck thee, no libations pour'd
Tell to the earth the triumphs of thy song ;
No princely halls echo thy strains along.
But still the strings are there ; and, if they break,
Even in death rare melody will make,
Mightst thou once more be tuned, and power be given
To tell in numbers all thou canst of heaven ! ”

VISITS TO CONCORD.



BY R. W. EMERSON.

VOL. 1.

N

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM MADAME ARCONATI TO
R. W. EMERSON.

“Je n’ai point rencontré, dans ma vie, de femme plus noble ; ayant autant de sympathie pour ses semblables, et dont l’esprit fut plus vivifiant. Je me suis tout de suite sentie attirée par elle. Quand je fis sa connaissance, j’ignorais que ce fut une femme remarquable.”

IV.

VISITS TO CONCORD.

I BECAME acquainted with Margaret in 1835. Perhaps it was a year earlier than Henry Hedge, who had long been her friend, told me of her genius and studies, and loaned me her manuscript translation of Goethe's Tasso. I was afterwards still more interested in her, by the warm praises of Harriet Martineau, who had become acquainted with her at Cambridge, and who, finding Margaret's fancy for seeing me, took a generous interest in bringing us together. I remember during a week in the winter of 1835-6, in which Miss Martineau was my guest, she returned again and again to the topic of Margaret's excelling genius and conversation, and enjoined it on me to seek her acquaintance; which I willingly promised. I am not sure that it was not in Miss Martineau's company, a little earlier, that I first saw her. And I find a memorandum, in her own journal, of a visit, made by my brother Charles and myself, to

Miss Martineau, at Mrs. Farrar's. It was not, however, till the next July, after a little diplomatizing in billets by the ladies, that her first visit to our house was arranged, and she came to spend a fortnight with my wife. I still remember the first half-hour of Margaret's conversation. She was then twenty-six years old. She had a face and frame that would indicate fulness and tenacity of life. She was rather under the middle height; her complexion was fair, with strong fair hair. She was then, as always, carefully and becomingly dressed, and of ladylike self-possession. For the rest, her appearance had nothing prepossessing. Her extreme plainness,—a trick of incessantly opening and shutting her eyelids,—the nasal tone of her voice,—all repelled; and I said to myself, we shall never get far. It is to be said, that Margaret made a disagreeable first impression on most persons, including those who became afterwards her best friends, to such an extreme that they did not wish to be in the same room with her. This was partly the effect of her manners, which expressed an overweening sense of power, and slight esteem of others, and partly the prejudice of her fame. She had a dangerous reputa-

tion for satire, in addition to her great scholarship. The men thought she carried too many guns, and the women did not like one who despised them. I believe I fancied her too much interested in personal history; and her talk was a comedy in which dramatic justice was done to everybody's foibles. I remember that she made me laugh more than I liked; for I was, at that time, an eager scholar of ethics, and had tasted the sweets of solitude and stoicism, and I found something profane in the hours of amusing gossip into which she drew me, and when I returned to my library had much to think of the crackling of thorns under a pot. Margaret, who had stuffed me out as a philosopher, in her own fancy, was too intent on establishing a good footing between us, to omit any art of winning. She studied my tastes, piqued and amused me, challenged frankness by frankness, and did not conceal the good opinion of me she brought with her, nor her wish to please. She was curious to know my opinions and experiences. Of course, it was impossible long to hold out against such urgent assault. She had an incredible variety of anecdotes, and the readiest wit to give an absurd turn to whatever passed;

and the eyes, which were so plain at first, soon swam with fun and drolleries, and the very tides of joy and superabundant life.

This rumour was much spread abroad, that she was sneering, scoffing, critical, disdainful of humble people, and of all but the intellectual. I had heard it whenever she was named. It was a superficial judgment. Her satire was only the pastime and necessity of her talent, the play of superabundant animal spirits. And it will be seen, in the sequel, that her mind presently disclosed many moods and powers, in successive platforms or terraces, each above each, that quite effaced this first impression, in the opulence of the following pictures.

Let us hear what she has herself to say on the subject of tea-table-talk, in a letter to a young lady, to whom she was already much attached:—

“I am repelled by your account of your party. It is beneath you to amuse yourself with active satire, with what is vulgarly called quizzing. When such a person as —— chooses to throw himself in your way, I sympathise with your keen perception of his ridiculous points. But to laugh

a whole evening at vulgar nondescripts,—is that an employment for one who was born passionately to love, to admire, to sustain truth? This would be much more excusable in a chameleon like me. Yet, whatever may be the vulgar view of my character, I can truly say, I know not the hour in which I ever looked for the ridiculous. It has always been forced upon me, and is the accident of my existence. I would not want the sense of it when it comes, for that would show an obtuseness of mental organization; but, on peril of my soul, I would not move an eyelash to look for it.”

When she came to Concord, she was already rich in friends, rich in experiences, rich in culture. She was well read in French, Italian, and German literature. She had learned Latin and a little Greek. But her English reading was incomplete; and, while she knew Molière, and Rousseau, and any quantity of French letters, memoirs, and novels, and was a dear student of Dante and Petrarca, and knew German books more cordially than any other person, she was little read in Shakspeare; and I believe I had the pleasure of making her acquainted with Chaucer, with Ben

Jonson, with Herbert, Chapman, Ford, Beaumont and Fletcher, with Bacon, and Sir Thomas Browne. I was seven years her senior, and had the habit of idle reading in old English books, and, though not much versed, yet quite enough to give me the right to lead her. She fancied that her sympathy and taste had led her to an exclusive culture of southern European books.

She had large experiences. She had been a precocious scholar at Dr. Park's school; good in mathematics and in languages. Her father, whom she had recently lost, had been proud of her, and petted her. She had drawn, at Cambridge, numbers of lively young men about her. She had had a circle of young women who were devoted to her, and who had described her as "a wonder of intellect, who had yet no religion." She had drawn to her every superior young man or young woman she had met, and whole romances of life and love had been confided, counselled, thought, and lived through, in her cognizance and sympathy.

These histories are rapid, so that she had already beheld many times the youth, meridian, and old age of passion. She had, besides, selected,

from so many, a few eminent companions, and already felt that she was not likely to see anything more beautiful than her beauties, anything more powerful and generous than her youths. She had found out her own secret by early comparison, and knew what power to draw confidence, what necessity to lead in every circle, belonged of right to her. Her powers were maturing, and nobler sentiments were subliming the first heats and rude experiments. She had outward calmness and dignity. She had come to the ambition to be filled with all nobleness.

Of the friends who surrounded her, at that period, it is neither easy to speak, nor not to speak. A life of Margaret is impossible without them, she mixed herself so inextricably with her company; and when this little book was first projected, it was proposed to entitle it "Margaret and her Friends," the subject persisting to offer itself in the plural number. But, on trial, that form proved impossible, and it only remained that the narrative, like a Greek tragedy, should suppose the chorus always on the stage, sympathising and sympathised with by the queen of the scene.

Yet I remember these persons as a fair

commanding troop, every one of them adorned by some splendour of beauty, of grace, of talent, or of character, and comprising in their band persons who have since disclosed sterling worth and elevated aims in the conduct of life.

Three beautiful women,—either of whom would have been the fairest ornament of Papanti's Assemblies, but for the presence of the other,—were her friends. One of these early became, and long remained, nearly the central figure in Margaret's brilliant circle, attracting to herself, by her grace and her singular natural eloquence, every feeling of affection, hope, and pride.

Two others I recal, whose rich and cultivated voices in song were,—one a little earlier, the other a little later,—the joy of every house into which they came; and, indeed, Margaret's taste for music was amply gratified in the taste and science which several persons among her intimate friends possessed. She was successively intimate with two sisters, whose taste for music had been opened, by a fine and severe culture, to the knowledge and to the expression of all the wealth of the German masters.

I remember another, whom every muse in-

spired, skilful alike with the pencil and the pen, and by whom both were almost contemned for their inadequateness, in the height and scope of her aims. "With her," said Margaret, "I can talk of anything. She is like me. She is able to look facts in the face. We enjoy the clearest, widest, most direct communication. She may be no happier than —, but she will know her own mind too clearly to make any great mistake in conduct, and will learn a deep meaning from her days."

"It is not in the way of tenderness that I love —. I prize her always; and this is all the love some natures ever know. And I also feel that I may always expect she will be with me. I delight to picture to myself certain persons translated, illuminated. There are a few in whom I see occasionally the future being piercing, promising,—whom I can strip of all that masks their temporary relations, and elevate to their natural position. Sometimes I have not known these persons intimately,—oftener I have; for it is only in the deepest hours that this light is likely to break out. But some of those I have best befriended I cannot thus portray, and very few men

I can. It does not depend at all on the beauty of their forms, at present; it is in the eye and the smile, that the hope shines through. I can see exactly how —— will look: not like this angel in the paper; she will not bring flowers, but a living coal, to the lips of the singer; her eyes will not burn as now with smothered fires, they will be ever deeper, and glow more intensely; her cheek will be smooth, but marble pale; her gestures nobly free, but few.”

Another was a lady who was devoted to landscape-painting, and who enjoyed the distinction of being the only pupil of Allston, and who, in her alliance with Margaret, gave as much honour as she received, by the security of her spirit, and by the heroism of her devotion to her friend. Her friends called her “the perpetual peace-offering,” and Margaret says of her,—“She is here, and her neighbourhood casts the mildness and purity too of the moonbeam on the else parti-coloured scene.”

There was another lady, more late and reluctantly entering Margaret’s circle, with a mind as high, and more mathematically exact, drawn by

taste to Greek, as Margaret to Italian genius, tempted to do homage to Margaret's flowing expressive energy, but still more inclined and secured to her side by the good sense and the heroism which Margaret disclosed, perhaps not a little by the sufferings which she addressed herself to alleviate, as long as Margaret lived. Margaret had a courage in her address which it was not easy to resist. She called all her friends by their Christian names. In their early intercourse I suppose this lady's billets were more punctiliously worded than Margaret liked ; so she subscribed herself, in reply, "Your affectionate 'Miss Fuller.'" When the difficulties were at length surmounted, and the conditions ascertained on which two admirable persons could live together, the best understanding grew up, and subsisted during her life. In her journal is a note :—

"Passed the morning in Sleepy Hollow, with ——. What fine, just distinctions she made! Worlds grew clearer as we talked. I grieve to see her fine frame subject to such rude discipline. But she truly said, 'I am not a failed experiment ; for, in the bad hours, I do not forget what I thought in the better.'" "

None interested her more at that time, and for many years after, than a youth with whom she had been acquainted in Cambridge before he left the University, and the unfolding of whose powers she had watched with the warmest sympathy. He was an amateur, and, but for the exactions not to be resisted of an *American*, that is to say, of a commercial career,—his acceptance of which she never ceased to regard as an apostasy,—himself a high artist. He was her companion, and, though much younger, her guide in the study of art. With him she examined, leaf by leaf, the designs of Raphael, of Michel Angelo, of Da Vinci, of Guercino, the architecture of the Greeks, the books of Palladio, the Ruins, and Prisons of Piranesi; and long kept up a profuse correspondence on books and studies in which they had a mutual interest. And yet, as happened so often, these literary sympathies, though sincere, were only veils and occasions to beguile the time, so profound was her interest in the character and fortunes of her friend.

There was another youth, whom she found later, of invalid habit, which had infected in some degree the tone of his mind, but of a delicate and pervasive insight, and the highest appreciation for

genius in letters, arts, and life. Margaret describes "his complexion as clear in its pallor, and his eye steady." His turn of mind, and his habits of life, had almost a monastic turn,—a jealousy of the common tendencies of literary men either to display or to philosophy. Margaret was struck with the singular fineness of his perceptions, and the pious tendency of his thoughts, and enjoyed with him his proud reception, not as from above, but almost on equal ground, of Homer and Æschylus, of Dante and Petrarch, of Montaigne, of Calderon, of Goethe. Margaret wished, also, to defend his privacy from the dangerous solicitations to premature authorship :—

"His mind should be approached close by one who needs its fragrance. All with him leads rather to glimpses and insights, than to broad, comprehensive views. Till he needs the public, the public does not need him. The lonely lamp, the niche, the dark cathedral grove, befit him best. Let him shroud himself in the symbols of his native ritual, till he can issue forth on the wings of song."

She was at this time, too, much drawn also to a man of poetic sensibility, and of much reading, —

which he took the greatest pains to conceal,—studious of the art of poetry, but still more a poet in his conversation than in his poems,—who attracted Margaret by the flowing humour with which he filled the present hour, and the prodigality with which he forgot all the past.

“Unequal and uncertain,” she says, “but in his good moods, of the best for a companion, absolutely abandoned to the revelations of the moment, without distrust or check of any kind, unlimited and delicate, abundant in thought, and free of motion, he enriches life, and fills the hour.”

“I wish I could retain ——’s talk last night. It was wonderful; it was about all the past experiences frozen down in the soul, and the impossibility of being penetrated by anything. ‘Had I met you,’ said he, ‘when I was young!’—but now nothing can penetrate.’ Absurd as was what he said, on one side, it was the finest poetic inspiration on the other, painting the cruel process of life, except where genius continually burns over the stubble fields.

“‘Life,’ he said, ‘is continually eating us up.

He said, 'Mr. E. is quite wrong about books. He wants them all good; now I want many bad. Literature is not merely a collection of gems, but a great system of interpretation.' He railed at me as artificial. 'It don't strike me when you are alone with me,' he says; 'but it does when others are present. You don't follow out the fancy of the moment; you converse; you have treasured thoughts to tell; you are disciplined—artificial.' I pleaded guilty, and observed that I supposed that it must be so with one of any continuity of thought, or earnestness of character. 'As to that,' says he, 'I shall not like you the better for your excellence. I don't know what is the matter. I feel strongly attracted towards you; but there is a drawback in my mind—I don't know exactly what. You will always be wanting to grow forward; now I like to grow backward, too. You are too ideal. Ideal people anticipate their lives; and they make themselves and everybody around them restless, by always being beforehand with themselves.'

"I listened attentively; for what he said was excellent. Following up the humour of the moment, he arrests admirable thoughts on the wing. But

I cannot but see, that what they say of my or other obscure lives is true of every prophetic, of every tragic character. And then I like to have them make me look on that side, and reverence the lovely forms of nature, and the shifting moods, and the clinging instincts. But I must not let them disturb me. There is an only guide, the voice in the heart, that asks, 'Was thy wish sincere? If so, thou canst not stray from nature, nor be so perverted but she will make thee true again.' I must take my own path, and learn from them all, without being paralysed for the day. We need great energy, faith, and self-reliance to endure to-day. My age may not be the best, my position may be bad, my character ill-formed; but Thou, oh Spirit! hast no regard to aught but the seeking heart; and, if I try to walk upright, wilt guide me. What despair must he feel, who, after a whole life passed in trying to build up himself, resolves that it would have been far better if he had kept still as the clod of the valley, or yielded easily as the leaf to every breeze! A path has been appointed me. I have walked in it as steadily as I could. I am what I am; that which I am not, teach me in the

others. I will bear the pain of imperfection, but not of doubt. E. must not shake me in my worldliness, nor — in the fine motion that has given me what I have of life, nor this child of genius make me lay aside the armour, without which I had lain bleeding on the field long since ; but, if they can keep closer to nature, and learn to interpret her as souls, also, let me learn from them what I have not.”

And, in connexion with this conversation, she has copied the following lines which this gentleman addressed to her :—

“ TO MARGARET.

“ I mark beneath thy life the virtue shine
That deep within the star's eye opes its day ;
I clutch the gorgeous thoughts thou throw'st away
From the profound unfathomable mine,
And with them this mean common hour do twine,
As glassy waters on the dry beach play.
And I were rich as night, them to combine
With my poor store, and warm me with thy ray.
From the fix'd answer of those dateless eyes
I meet bold hints of spirit's mystery
As to what's past, and hungry prophecies
Of deeds to-day, and things which are to be ;
Of lofty life that with the eagle flies,
And humble love that clasps humanity.”

I have thus vaguely designated, among the numerous group of her friends, only those who were much in her company, in the early years of my acquaintance with her.

She wore this circle of friends, when I first knew her, as a necklace of diamonds about her neck. They were so much to each other, that Margaret seemed to represent them all, and, to know her, was to acquire a place with them. The confidences given her were their best, and she held them to them. She was an active, inspiring companion and correspondent, and all the art, the thought, and the nobleness in New England, seemed, at that moment, related to her, and she to it. She was everywhere a welcome guest. The houses of her friends in town and country were open to her, and every hospitable attention eagerly offered. Her arrival was a holiday, and so was her abode. She stayed a few days, often a week, more seldom a month, and all tasks that could be suspended were put aside to catch the favourable hour, in walking, riding, or boating, to talk with this joyful guest, who brought wit, anecdotes, love-stories, tragedies, oracles with her, and, with her broad web of relations to so many fine friends,

seemed like the queen of some parliament of love, who carried the key to all confidences, and to whom every question had been finally referred.

Persons were her game, specially, if marked by fortune, or character, or success;—to such was she sent. She addressed them with a hardihood, —almost a haughty assurance,—queen-like. Indeed, they fell in her way, where the access might have seemed difficult, by wonderful casualties; and the inveterate recluse, the coyest maid, the waywardest poet, made no resistance, but yielded at discretion, as if they had been waiting for her, all doors to this imperious dame. She disarmed the suspicion of recluse scholars by the absence of bookishness. The ease with which she entered into conversation made them forget all they had heard of her; and she was infinitely less interested in literature than in life. They saw she valued earnest persons, and Dante, Petrarch, and Goethe, because they thought as she did, and gratified her with high portraits, which she was everywhere seeking. She drew her companions to surprising confessions. She was the wedding-guest, to whom the long-pent story must be told; and they were not less struck, on reflection, at the suddenness of

the friendship which had established, in one day, new and permanent covenants. She extorted the secret of life, which cannot be told without setting heart and mind in a glow ; and thus had the best of those she saw. Whatever romance, whatever virtue, whatever impressive experience,—this came to her ; and she lived in a superior circle ; for they suppressed all their common-place in her presence.

She was perfectly true to this confidence. She never confounded relations, but kept a hundred fine threads in her hand, without crossing or entangling any. An entire intimacy, which seemed to make both sharers of the whole horizon of each others' and of all truth, did not yet make her false to any other friend ; gave no title to the history that an equal trust of another friend had put in her keeping. In this reticence was no prudery and no effort. For, so rich her mind, that she never was tempted to treachery, by the desire of entertaining. The day was never long enough to exhaust her opulent memory ; and I, who knew her intimately for ten years,—from July, 1836, till August, 1846, when she sailed for Europe,—never saw her without surprise at her new powers.

Of the conversations above alluded to, the substance was whatever was suggested by her passionate wish for equal companions, to the end of making life altogether noble. With the firmest tact she led the discourse into the midst of their daily living and working, recognising the goodwill and sincerity which each man has in his aims, and treating so playfully and intellectually all the points, that one seemed to see his life *en beau*, and was flattered by beholding what he had found so tedious in its workday weeds, shining in glorious costume. Each of his friends passed before him in the new light; hope seemed to spring under his feet, and life was worth living. The auditor jumped for joy, and thirsted for unlimited draughts. What! is this the dame, who, I heard, was sneering and critical? this the blue-stocking, of whom I stood in terror and dislike? this wondrous woman, full of counsel, full of tenderness, before whom every mean thing is ashamed, and hides itself; this new Corinne, more variously gifted, wise, sportive, eloquent, who seems to have learned all languages, Heaven knows when or how,—I should think she was born to them,—magnificent, prophetic, reading my life at her will,

and puzzling me with riddles like this, "Yours is an example of a destiny springing from character:" and, again, "I see your destiny hovering before you, but it always escapes from you."

The test of this eloquence was its range. It told on children, and on old people; on men of the world, and on sainted maids. She could hold them all by her honied tongue. A lady of the best eminence, whom Margaret occasionally visited, in one of our cities of spindles, speaking one day of her neighbours, said, "I stand in a certain awe of the monied men, the manufacturers, and so on, knowing that they will have small interest in Plato, or in Biot; but I saw them approach Margaret, with perfect security, for she could give them bread that they could eat." Some persons are thrown off their balance when in society; others are thrown on to balance; the excitement of company, and the observation of other characters, correct their biases. Margaret always appeared to unexpected advantage in conversation with a large circle. She had more sanity than any other; whilst, in private, her vision was often through coloured lenses.

Her talents were so various, and her conversa-

tion so rich and entertaining, that one might talk with her many times, by the parlour fire, before he discovered the strength which served as foundation to so much accomplishment and eloquence. But, concealed under flowers and music, was the broadest good sense, very well able to dispose of all this pile of native and foreign ornaments, and quite able to work without them. She could always rally on this, in every circumstance, and in every company, and find herself on a firm footing of equality with any party whatever, and make herself useful, and, if need be, formidable.

The old Anaximenes, seeking, I suppose, for a source sufficiently diffusive, said, that Mind must be *in the air*, which, when all men breathed, they were filled with one intelligence. And when men have larger measures of reason, as Æsop, Cervantes, Franklin, Scott, they gain in universality, or are no longer confined to a few associates, but are good company for all persons,—philosophers, women, men of fashion, tradesmen, and servants. Indeed, an older philosopher than Anaximenes, namely, language itself, had taught to distinguish superior or purer sense as *common* sense.

Margaret had, with certain limitations, or must

we say, *strictures*, these larger lungs, inhaling this universal element, and could speak to Jew and Greek, free and bond, to each in his own tongue. The Concord stage-coachman distinguished her by his respect, and the chambermaid was pretty sure to confide to her, on the second day, her homely romance.

I regret that it is not in my power to give any true report of Margaret's conversation. She soon became an established friend and frequent inmate of our house, and continued, thenceforward, for years to come, once in three or four months, to spend a week or a fortnight with us. She adopted all the people and all the interests she found here. Your people shall be my people, and yonder darling boy I shall cherish as my own. Her ready sympathies endeared her to my wife and my mother, each of whom highly esteemed her good sense and sincerity. She suited each, and all. Yet, she was not a person to be suspected of complaisance, and her attachments, one might say, were chemical.

She had so many tasks of her own, that she was a very easy guest to entertain, as she could be left to herself, day after day, without apology.

According to our usual habit, we seldom met in the forenoon. After dinner, we read something together, or walked, or rode. In the evening, she came to the library, and many and many a conversation was there held, whose details, if they could be preserved, would justify all encomiums. They interested me in every manner;—talent, memory, wit, stern introspection, poetic play, religion, the finest personal feeling, the aspects of the future, each followed each in full activity, and left me, I remember, enriched and sometimes astonished by the gifts of my guest. Her topics were numerous, but the cardinal points of poetry, love, and religion, were never far off. She was a student of art, and, though untravelled, knew, much better than most persons who had been abroad, the conventional reputation of each of the masters. She was familiar with all the field of elegant criticism in literature. Among the problems of the day, these two attracted her chiefly, Mythology and Dæmonology; then, also, French Socialism, especially as it concerned woman; the whole prolific family of reforms, and, of course, the genius and career of each remarkable person. She had other friends, in this town, beside those

in my house. A lady, already alluded to, lived in the village, who had known her longer than I, and whose prejudices Margaret had resolutely fought down, until she converted her into the firmest and most efficient of friends. In 1842, Nathaniel Hawthorne, already then known to the world by his *Twice-Told Tales*, came to live in Concord, in the "Old Manse," with his wife, who was herself an artist. With these welcomed persons Margaret formed a strict and happy acquaintance. She liked their old house, and the taste which had filled it with new articles of beautiful form, yet harmonized with the antique furniture left by the former proprietors. She liked, too, the pleasing walks, and rides, and boatings, which that neighbourhood commanded.

In 1842, William Ellery Channing, whose wife was her sister, built a house in Concord, and this circumstance made a new tie and another home for Margaret.

ARCANA.

It was soon evident that there was somewhat a little pagan about her; that she had some faith more or less distinct in a fate, and in a guardian

genius; that her fancy, or her pride, had played with her religion. She had a taste for gems, ciphers, talismans, omens, coincidences, and birth-days. She had a special love for the planet Jupiter, and a belief that the month of September was inauspicious to her. She never forgot that her name, Margarita, signified a pearl. "When I first met with the name Leila," she said, "I knew, from the very look and sound, it was mine; I knew that it meant night,—night, which brings out stars, as sorrow brings out truths." Sortilege she valued. She tried *sortes biblicæ*, and her hits were memorable. I think each new book which interested her, she was disposed to put to this test, and know if it had somewhat personal to say to her. As happens to such persons, these guesses were justified by the event. She chose carbuncle for her own stone, and when a dear friend was to give her a gem, this was the one selected. She valued what she had somewhere read, that carbuncles are male and female. The female casts out light, the male has his within himself. "Mine," she said, "is the male." And she was wont to put on her carbuncle, a bracelet, or some selected gem, to write letters to certain friends. One of

her friends she coupled with the onyx, another in a decided way with the amethyst. She learned that the ancients esteemed this gem a talisman to dispel intoxication, to give good thoughts and understanding. "The Greek meaning is *antidote against drunkenness*." She characterised her friends by these stones, and wrote to the last mentioned, the following lines :—

" TO ———.

" Slow wandering on a tangled way,
To their lost child pure spirits say :—
The diamond marshal thee by day,
By night, the carbuncle defend,
Heart's blood of a bosom friend.
On thy brow, the amethyst,
Violet of purest earth,
When by fullest sunlight kiss'd,
Best reveals its regal birth;
And when that haloed moment flies,
Shall keep thee steadfast, chaste, and wise."

Coincidences, good and bad, *contretemps*, seals, ciphers, mottoes, omens, anniversaries, names, dreams, are all of a certain importance to her. Her letters are often dated on some marked anniversary of her own, or of her correspondent's calendar. She signalized saints' days, "All-Souls," and "All-Saints," by poems, which had

for her a mystical value. She remarked a pre-established harmony of the names of her personal friends, as well as of her historical favourites; that of Emanuel, for Swedenborg; and Rosencrantz, for the head of the Rosicrucians. "If Christian Rosencrantz," she said, "is not a made name, the genius of the age interfered in the baptismal rite, as in the cases of the archangels of art, Michael and Raphael, and in giving the name of Emanuel to the captain of the New Jerusalem. *Sub rosa, crux*, I think, is the true derivation, and not the chemical one, generation, corruption, &c." In this spirit, she soon surrounded herself with a little mythology of her own. She had a series of anniversaries, which she kept. Her seal-ring of the flying Mercury had its legend. She chose the *Sistrum* for her emblem, and had it carefully drawn with a view to its being engraved on a gem. And I know not how many verses and legends came recommended to her by this symbolism. Her dreams, of course, partook of this symmetry. The same dream returns to her periodically, annually, and punctual to its night. One dream she marks in her journal as repeated for the fourth time:—

“ In C., I at last distinctly recognised the figure of the early vision, whom I found after I had left A., who led me, on the bridge, towards the city, glittering in sunset, but, midway, the bridge went under water. I have often seen in her face that it was she, but refused to believe it.”

She valued, of course, the significance of flowers, and chose emblems for her friends from her garden.

“ TO ———, WITH HEARTSEASE.

“ Content, in purple lustre clad,
Kingly serene, and golden glad,
No demi-hues of sad contrition,
No pallors of enforced submission ;—
Give me such content as this,
And keep awhile the rosy bliss.”

DÆMONOLOGY.

This catching at straws of coincidence, where all is geometrical, seems the necessity of certain natures. It is true, that, in every good work, the particulars are right, and, that every spot of light on the ground, under the trees, is a perfect image of the sun. Yet, for astronomical purposes, an observatory is better than an orchard ; and in a

universe which is nothing but generations, or an unbroken suite of cause and effect, to infer Providence, because a man happens to find a shilling on the pavement, just when he wants one to spend, is puerile, and much as if each of us should date his letters and notes of hand from his own birthday, instead of from Christ's or the king's reign, or the current Congress. These, to be sure, are also, at first, petty and private beginnings, but, by the world of men, clothed with a social and cosmical character.

It will be seen, however, that this propensity Margaret held with certain tenets of fate, which always swayed her, and which Goethe, who had found room and fine names for all this in his system, had encouraged: and, I may add, which her own experiences, early and late, seemed strangely to justify.

Some extracts, from her letters to different persons, will show how this matter lay in her mind.

*“December 17, 1829.—*The following instance of beautiful credulity, in Rousseau, has taken my mind greatly. This remote seeking for the decrees of fate, this feeling of a destiny, casting its

shadows from the very morning of thought, is the most beautiful species of idealism in our day. 'Tis finely manifested in Wallenstein, where the two common men sum up their superficial observations on the life and doings of Wallenstein, and show that, not until this agitating crisis, have they caught any idea of the deep thoughts which shaped that hero, who has, without their feeling it, moulded *their* existence.

“ ‘Tasso,’ says Rousseau, ‘has predicted my misfortunes. Have you remarked that Tasso has this peculiarity, that you cannot take from his work a single strophe, nor from any strophe a single line, nor from any line a single word, without disarranging the whole poem? Very well! take away the strophe I speak of, the stanza has no connexion with those that precede or follow it; it is absolutely useless. *Tasso probably wrote it involuntarily, and without comprehending it himself.*’

“As to the impossibility of taking from Tasso without disarranging the poem, &c., I dare say 'tis not one whit more justly said of his, than of any other narrative poem. *Mais, n'importe,* 'tis sufficient if Rousseau believed this. I found the stanza in question; admire its meaning beauty.

“ I hope you have Italian enough to appreciate the singular perfection in expression. If not, look to Fairfax’s *Jerusalem Delivered*, Canto 12, Stanza 77 ; but Rousseau says these lines have no connexion with what goes before, or after ; *they are preceded*, stanza 76, by these three lines, which he does not think fit to mention.”

* * * *

“ Misero mostro d’infelice amore ;
Misero mostro a cui sol pena è degna
Dell’ immensa impietà, la vita indegna.

“ Vivrò fra i miei tormenti e fra le cure,
Mie giuste furie, forsennato errante.
Paventerò l’ombra solinghe e scure,
Che l’primo error mi recheranno avanti :
E del sol che scopri le mie sventure,
A schivo ed in orrore avrò il semblante.
Temerò me medesimo ; a da me stesso
Sempre fuggendo, avrò me sempre appresso.”

LA GERUSALENME LIBERATA, c. xii. 76, 77.

TO R. W. E.

“ *Dec.* 12, 1843. — When Goethe received a letter from Zelter, with a handsome superscription, he said, ‘ Lay that aside ; it is Zelter’s true handwriting. Every man has a dæmon, who is busy to confuse and limit his life. No way is the

action of this power more clearly shown, than in the hand-writing. On this occasion, the evil influences have been evaded ; the mood, the hand, the pen and paper have conspired to let our friend write truly himself.'

"You may perceive, I quote from memory, as the sentences are anything but Goethean ; but I think often of this little passage. With me, for weeks and months, the dæmon works his will. Nothing succeeds with me. I fall ill, or am otherwise interrupted. At these times, whether of frost, or sultry weather, I would gladly neither plant nor reap,—wait for the better times, which sometimes come, when I forget that sickness is ever possible ; when all interruptions are upborne like straws on the full stream of my life, and the words that accompany it are as much in harmony as sedges murmuring near the bank. Not all, yet not unlike. But it often happens, that something presents itself, and must be done, in the bad time ; nothing presents itself in the good : so I, like the others, seem worse and poorer than I am."

In another letter to an earlier friend, she expatiates a little.

"As to the Dæmoniacal, I know not that I can

say to you anything more precise than you find from Goethe. There are no precise terms for such thoughts. The word *instinctive* indicates their existence. I intimated it in the little piece on the Drachenfels. It may be best understood, perhaps, by a symbol. As the sun shines from the serene heavens, dispelling noxious exhalations, and calling forth exquisite thoughts on the surface of earth in the shape of shrub or flower, so gnome-like works the fire within the hidden caverns and secret veins of earth, fashioning existences which have a longer share in time, perhaps, because they are not immortal in thought. Love, beauty, wisdom, goodness are intelligent, but this power moves only to seize its prey. It is not necessarily either malignant or the reverse, but it has no scope beyond demonstrating its existence. When conscious, self-asserting, it becomes (as power working for its own sake, unwilling to acknowledge love for its superior, must) the devil. That is the legend of Lucifer, the star that would not own its centre. Yet, while it is unconscious, it is not devilish, only *dæmoniac*. In nature, we trace it in all volcanic workings, in a boding position of lights, in whispers of the wind, which

has no pedigree ; in deceitful invitations of the water, in the sullen rock, which never shall find a voice, and in the shapes of all those beings who go about seeking what they may devour. We speak of a mystery, a dread ; we shudder, but we approach still nearer, and a part of our nature listens, sometimes answers to this influence, which, if not indestructible, is at least indissolubly linked with the existence of matter.

“ In genius, and in character, it works, as you say, instinctively ; it refuses to be analysed by the understanding, and is most of all inaccessible to the person who possesses it. We can only say, I have it, he has it. You have seen it often in the eyes of those Italian faces you like. It is most obvious in the eye. As we look on such eyes, we think on the tiger, the serpent, beings who lurk, glide, fascinate, mysteriously control. For it is occult by its nature, and if it could meet you on the highway, and be familiarly known as an acquaintance, could not exist. The angels of light do not love, yet they do not insist on exterminating it.

“ It has given rise to the fables of wizard, enchantress, and the like ; these beings are scarcely

good, yet not necessarily bad. Power tempts them. They draw their skills from the dead, because their being is coeval with that of matter, and matter is the mother of death."

In later days, she allowed herself sometimes to dwell sadly on the resistances which she called her fate, and remarked, that "all life that has been or could be natural to me, is invariably denied."

She wrote long afterwards :—

"My days at Milan were not unmarked. I have known some happy hours, but they all lead to sorrow, and not only the cups of wine, but of milk, seem drugged with poison, for me. It does not seem to be my fault, this destiny. I do not court these things,—they come. I am a poor magnet, with power to be wounded by the bodies I attract."

TEMPERAMENT.

I said that Margaret had a broad good sense, which brought her near to all people. I am to say that she had also a strong temperament, which is that counter force which makes individuality, by

driving all the powers in the direction of the ruling thought or feeling, and, when it is allowed full sway, isolating them. These two tendencies were always invading each other, and now one and now the other carried the day. This alternation perplexes the biographer, as it did the observer. We contradict on the second page what we affirm on the first: and I remember how often I was compelled to correct my impressions of her character when living; for after I had settled it once for all that she wanted this or that perception, at our next interview she would say with emphasis the very word.

I think, in her case, there was something abnormal in those obscure habits and necessities which we denote by the word Temperament. In the first days of our acquaintance, I felt her to be a foreigner,—that, with her, one would always be sensible of some barrier, as if in making up a friendship with a cultivated Spaniard or Turk. She had a strong constitution, and of course its reactions were strong; and this is the reason why in all her life she has so much to say of her *fate*. She was in jubilant spirits in the morning, and ended the day with nervous headache, whose

spasms, my wife told me, produced total prostration. She had great energy of speech and action, and seemed formed for high emergencies.

Her life concentrated itself on certain happy days, happy hours, happy moments. The rest was a void. She had read that a man of letters must lose many days, to work well in one. Much more must a Sappho or a sibyl. The capacity of pleasure was balanced by the capacity of pain. "If I had wist!—" she writes, "I am a worse self-tormentor than Rousseau, and all my riches are fuel to the fire. My beautiful lore, like the tropic clime, hatches scorpions to sting me. There is a verse, which Annie of Lochroyan sings about her ring, that torments my memory, 'tis so true of myself."

When I found she lived at a rate so much faster than mine, and which was violent compared with mine, I foreboded rash and painful crises, and had a feeling as if a voice cried, *Stand from under!*—as if, a little further on, this destiny was threatened with jars and reverses, which no friendship could avert or console. This feeling partly wore off, on better acquaintance, but remained latent; and I had always an impression that her energy was too much a force of blood, and therefore never felt the

security for her peace which belongs to more purely intellectual natures. She seemed more vulnerable. For the same reason, she remained inscrutable to me; her strength was not my strength,—her powers were a surprise. She passed into new states of great advance, but I understood these no better. It were long to tell her peculiarities. Her childhood was full of presentiments. She was then a somnambulist. She was subject to attacks of delirium, and, later, perceived that she had spectral illusions. When she was twelve, she had a determination of blood to the head. “My parents,” she said, “were much mortified to see the fineness of my complexion destroyed. My own vanity was for a time severely wounded; but I recovered, and made up my mind to be bright and ugly.”

She was all her lifetime the victim of disease and pain. She read and wrote in bed, and believed that she could understand anything better when she was ill. Pain acted like a girdle, to give tension to her powers. A lady, who was with her one day during a terrible attack of nervous headache, which made Margaret totally helpless, assured me that Margaret was yet in the finest vein of humour, and kept those who were assisting her

in a strange, painful excitement, between laughing and crying, by perpetual brilliant sallies. There were other peculiarities of habit and power. When she turned her head on one side, she alleged she had second sight, like St. Francis. These traits or predispositions made her a willing listener to all the uncertain science of mesmerism and its goblin brood, which have been rife in recent years.

She had a feeling that she ought to have been a man, and said of herself, "A man's ambition with a woman's heart, is an evil lot." In some verses which she wrote "To the Moon," occur these lines :—

"But if I steadfast gaze upon thy face,
A human secret, like my own, I trace ;
For, through the woman's smile looks the male eye."

And she found something of true portraiture in a disagreeable novel of Balzac's, "*Le Livre Mystique*," in which an equivocal figure exerts alternately a masculine and a feminine influence on the characters of the plot.

Of all this nocturnal element in her nature, she was very conscious, and was disposed, of course, to give it as fine names as it would carry, and to draw advantage from it. "Attica," she said to a friend,

“ is your province, Thessaly is mine : Attica produced the marble wonders of the great geniuses ; but Thessaly is the land of magic.”

“ I have a great share of Typhon to the Osiris, wild rush and leap, blind force for the sake of force.”

“ Dante, thou didst not describe, in all thy apartments of Inferno, this tremendous repression of an existence half unfolded ; this swoon as the soul was ready to be born.”

“ Every year I live, I dislike routine more and more, though I see that society rests on that, and other falsehoods. The more I screw myself down to hours, the more I become expert at giving out thought and life in regulated rations,—the more I weary of this world, and long to move upon the wing, without props and sedan chairs.”

TO R. W. E.

“ *Dec. 26, 1839.*—If you could look into my mind just now, you would send far from you those who love and hate. I am on the Drachenfels, and cannot get off ; it is one of my naughtiest moods. Last Sunday, I wrote a long letter, describing it in prose and verse, and I had twenty minds to

send it you as a literary curiosity ; then I thought, this might destroy relations, and I might not be able to be calm and chip marble with you any more, if I talked to you in magnetism and music ; so I sealed and sent it in the due direction.

“ I remember you say, that forlorn seasons often turn out the most profitable. Perhaps I shall find it so. I have been reading Plato all the week, because I could not write. I hoped to be tuned up thereby. I perceive, with gladness, a keener insight in myself, day by day ; yet, after all, could not make a good statement this morning on the subject of beauty.”

She had, indeed, a rude strength, which, if it could have been supported by an equal health, would have given her the efficiency of the strongest men. As it was, she had great power of work. The account of her reading in Groton is at a rate like Gibbon's, and, later, that of her writing, considered with the fact that writing was not grateful to her, is incredible. She often proposed to her friends, in the progress of intimacy, to write every day. “ I think less than a daily offering of thought and feeling would not content me, so much seems

to pass unspoken." In Italy, she tells Madame Arconati, that she has "more than a hundred correspondents:" and it was her habit there to devote one day of every week to those distant friends. The facility with which she assumed stints of literary labour, which veteran feeders of the press would shrink from—assumed and performed—when her friends were to be served, I have often observed with wonder, and with fear, when I considered the near extremes of ill-health, and the manner in which her life heaped itself in high and happy moments, which were avenged by lassitude and pain.

"As each task comes," she said, "I borrow a readiness from its aspect, as I always do brightness from the face of a friend. Yet, as soon as the hour is past, I sink."

I think most of her friends will remember to have felt, at one time or another, some uneasiness, as if this athletic soul craved a larger atmosphere than it found; as if she were ill-timed and mismatched, and felt in herself a tide of life, which compared with the slow circulation of others as a torrent with a rill. She found no full expression of it but in music. Beethoven's Symphony was

the only right thing the city of the Puritans had for her. Those to whom music has a representative value, affording them a stricter copy of their inward life than any other of the expressive arts, will, perhaps, enter into the spirit which dictated the following letter to her patron saint, on her return, one evening, from the Boston Academy of Music.

“ TO BEETHOVEN.

“ *Saturday Evening, 25th Nov., 1843.*

“ My only friend,

“ How shall I thank thee for once more breaking the chains of my sorrowful slumber? My heart beats. I live again, for I feel that I am worthy audience for thee, and that my being would be reason enough for thine.

“ Master, my eyes are always clear. I see that the universe is rich, if I am poor. I see the insignificance of my sorrows. In my will, I am not a captive; in my intellect, not a slave. Is it then my fault that the palsy of my affections benumbs my whole life?

“ I know that the curse is but for the time. I know what the eternal justice promises. But on

this one sphere, it is sad. Thou didst say, thou hadst no friend but thy art. But that one is enough. I have no art in which to vent the swell of a soul as deep as thine, Beethoven, and of a kindred frame. Thou wilt not think me presumptuous in this saying, as another might. I have always known that thou wouldst welcome and know me, as would no other who ever lived upon the earth since its first creation.

“Thou wouldst forgive me, master, that I have not been true to my eventual destiny, and therefore have suffered on every side ‘the pangs of despised love.’ Thou didst the same; but thou didst borrow from those errors the inspiration of thy genius. Why is it not thus with me? Is it because, as a woman, I am bound by a physical law, which prevents the soul from manifesting itself? Sometimes the moon seems mockingly to say so—to say that I, too, shall not shine, unless I can find a sun. O, cold and barren moon, tell a different tale!

“But thou, O blessed master! dost answer all my questions, and make it my privilege to be. Like a humble wife to the sage, or poet, it is my triumph that I can understand and cherish thee:

like a mistress, I arm thee for the fight: like a young daughter, I tenderly bind thy wounds. Thou art to me beyond compare, for thou art all I want. No heavenly sweetness of saint or martyr, no many-leaved Raphael, no golden Plato, is anything to me, compared with thee. The infinite Shakspeare, the stern Angelo, Dante—bitter-sweet like thee—are no longer seen in thy presence. And, beside these names, there are none that could vibrate in thy crystal sphere. Thou hast all of them, and that ample surge of life besides, that great winged being which they only dreamed of. There is none greater than Shakspeare; he, too, is a god; but his creations are successive; thy *fiat* comprehends them all.

“Last summer, I met thy mood in nature, on those wide impassioned plains flower and crag-bestrown. There, the tide of emotion had rolled over, and left the vision of its smiles and sobs, as I saw to-night from thee.

“If thou wouldst take me wholly to thyself——! I am lost in this world, where I sometimes meet angels, but of a different star from mine. Even so does thy spirit plead with all spirits. But thou dost triumph and bring them all in.

“ Master, I have this summer envied the oriole, which had even a swinging nest in the high bough. I have envied the least flower that came to seed, though that seed were strown to the wind. But I envy none when I am with thee.”

END OF VOL. I.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 05495 454 8

